KawaiiSensei

Downloadable pose references included

Famous Creators in Japan

KawaiiSensei

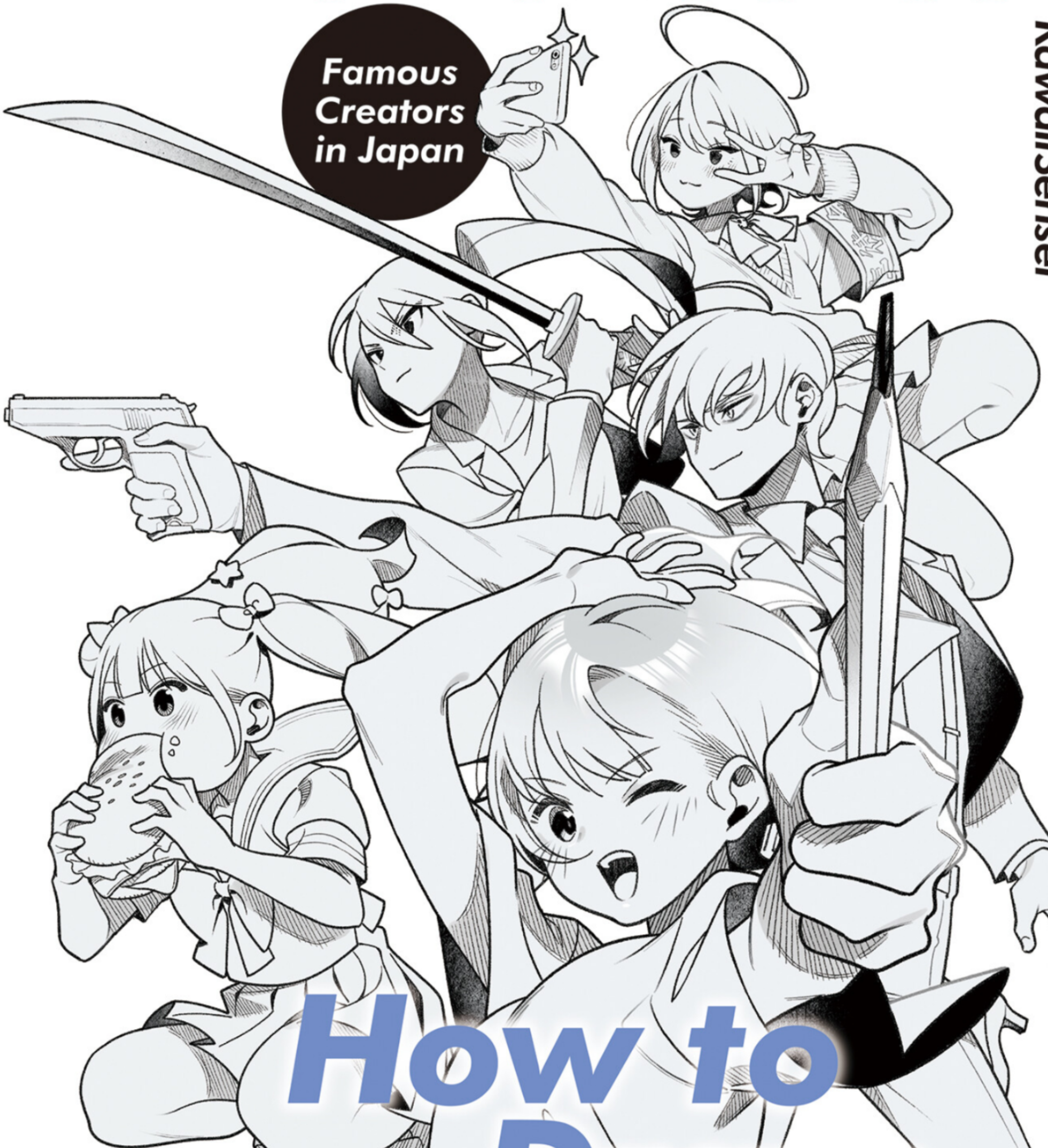
How to Draw Character Poses

KADOKAWA

KawaiiSensei

Famous Creators in Japan

KawaiiSensei



How to Draw Character Poses

KADOKAWA

Ahem.

Hello!

Thank you for picking up the second volume of KawaiiSensei!

KawaiiSensei

Something has always bothered me.

It's hard to draw an appealing character with just a pose example.

ざわ

ざわ

ざわ

That's why this book exists!

At Different Angles

Shoulder angle is important!

Upper arm in the back hidden behind the body

Stretching out at an angle looks natural

Twist

Remember to tilt the forward leg in 3D!

From the side, the back foot goes up more, but showing a bit of the foot from the front makes it easier to understand, even if it's not realistic.

Front

Upper body rotates toward front arm and shoulder goes down

Twist

Note the overall flow from the head to the knee of the back leg

Side

First, you learn poses with these easy-to-understand colored examples!

Then, we support you with character explanations and drawings for the poses!

Match the directions of the hair, ribbon, and clothing.

Draw the back and front carefully for complex poses to make them easier to understand

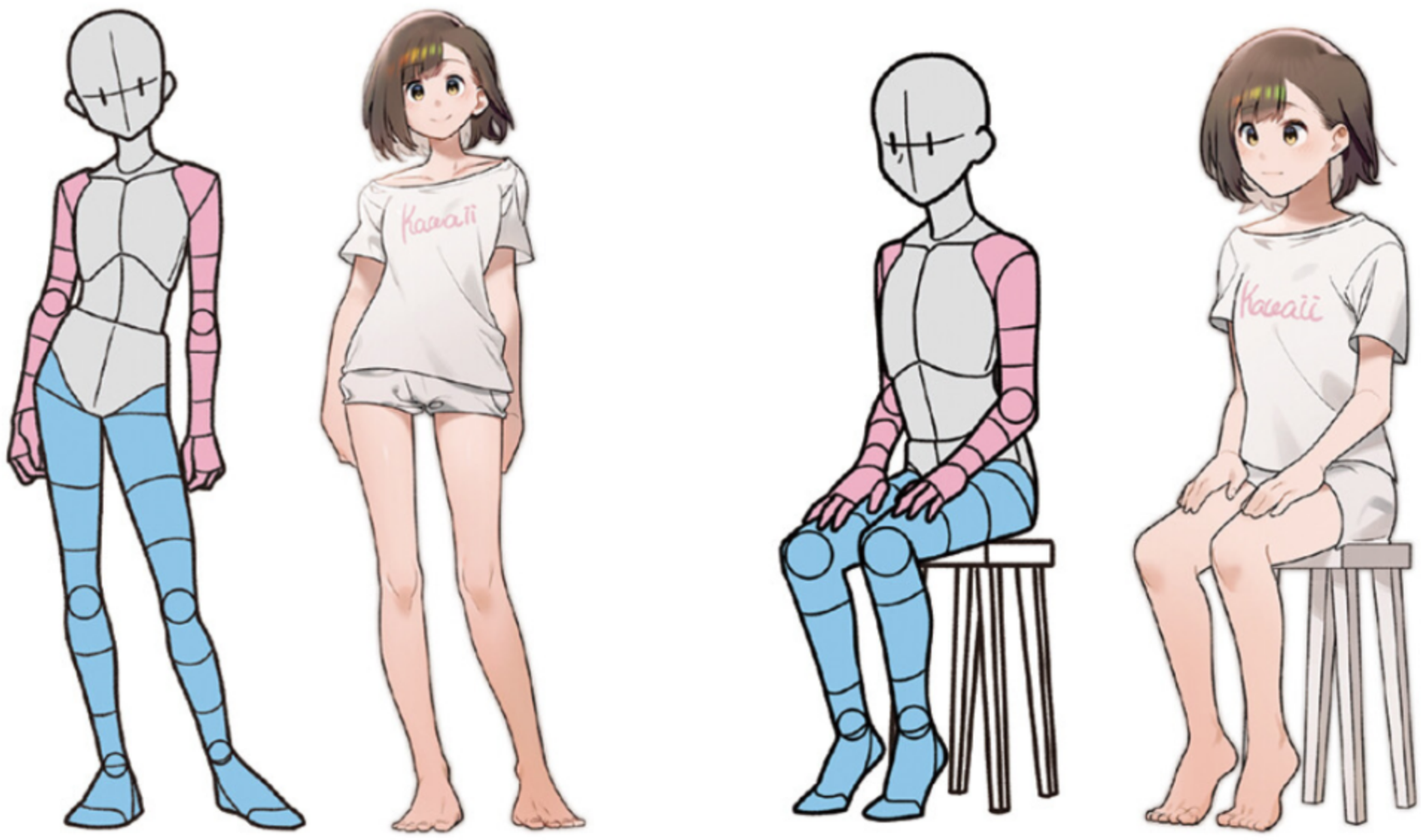
Focus on the silhouette and flutter the skirt less

To learn more about how to use this convenient book, go to the next page!

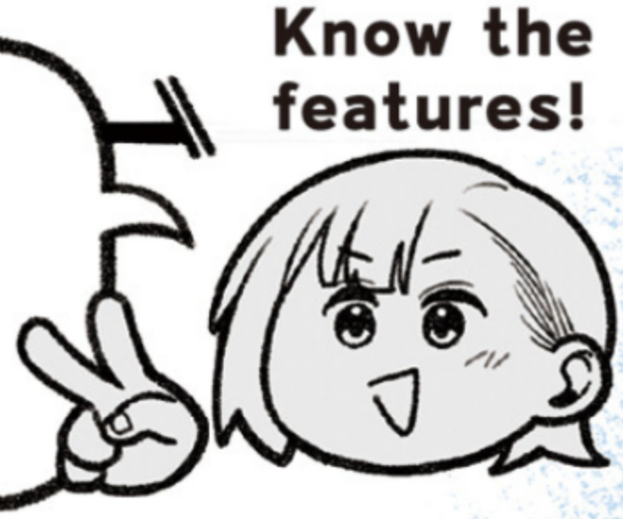
Learning With This Book Step ①

First, learn the base pose!

Understand the basic pose without anything extra.

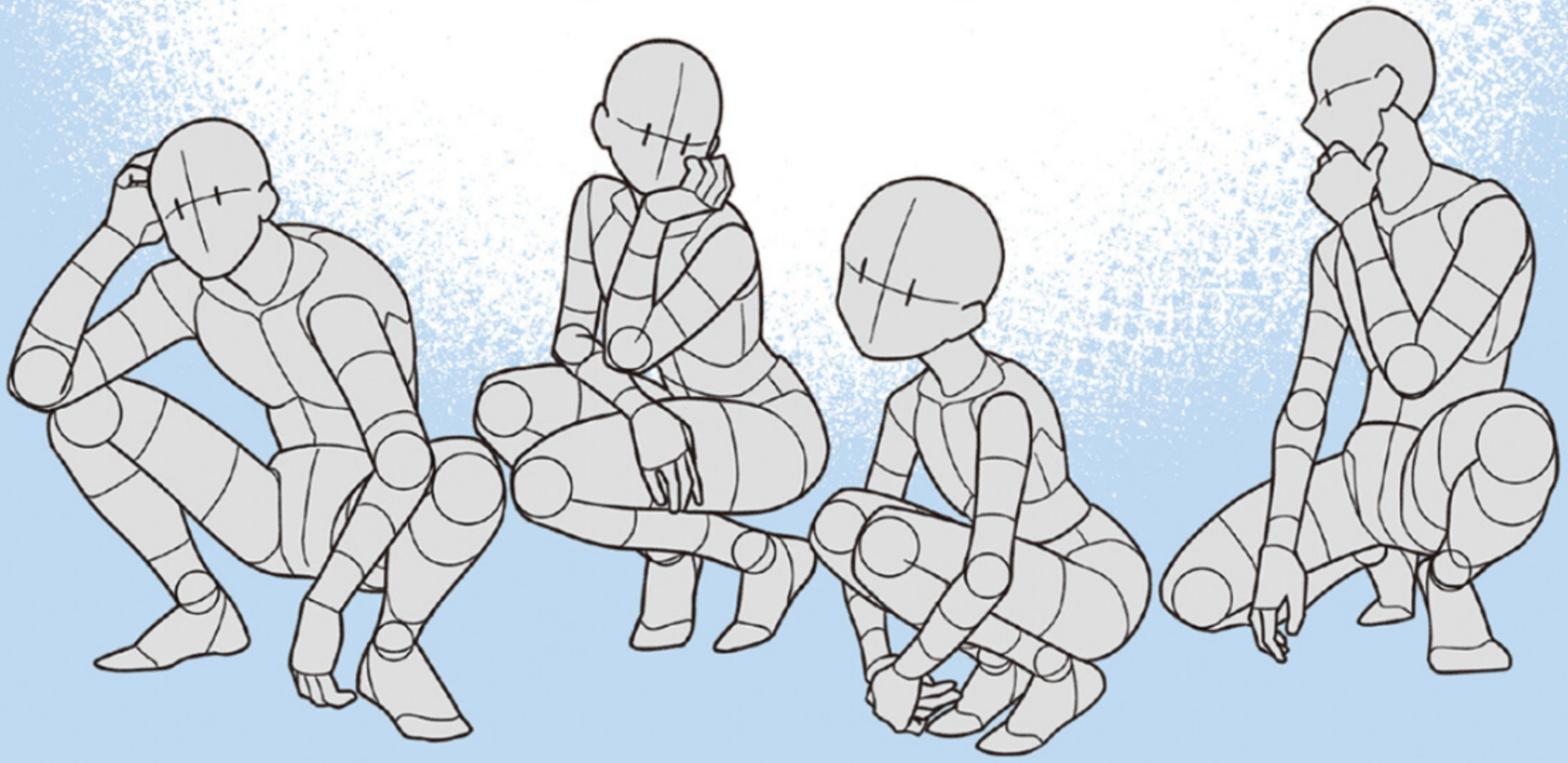


Learning With This Book Step ②

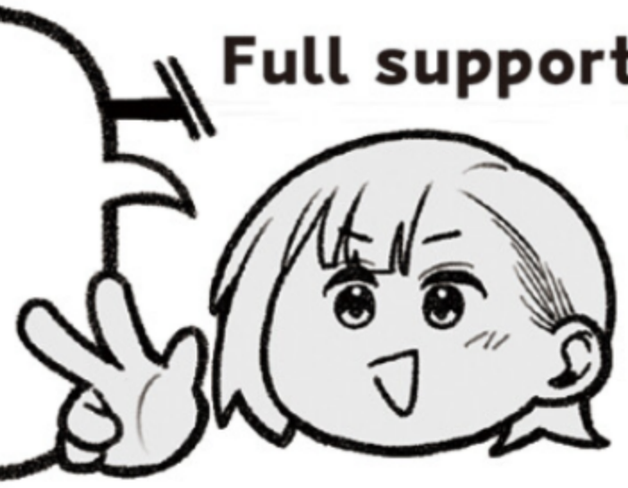


You can learn how to draw poses with character.

4 types of male and female poses for 8 total showing each character's personality.

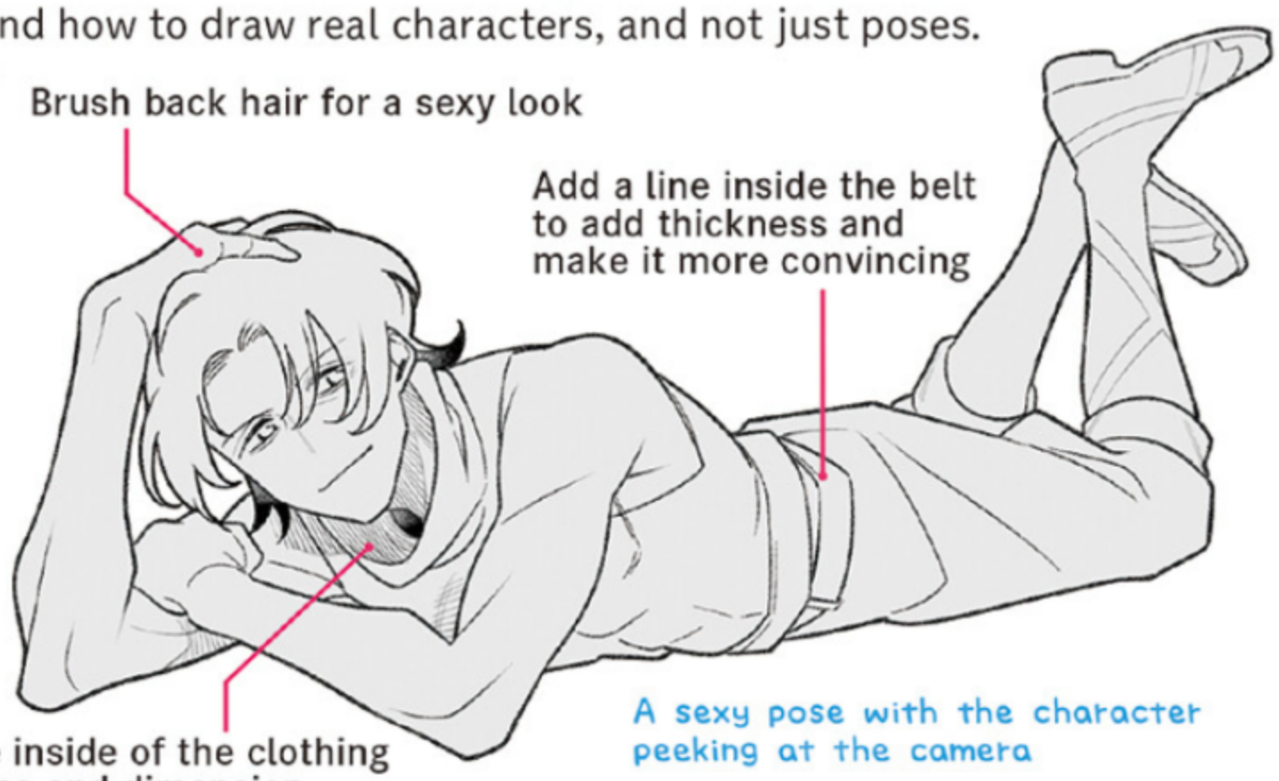


Learning With This Book Step ③

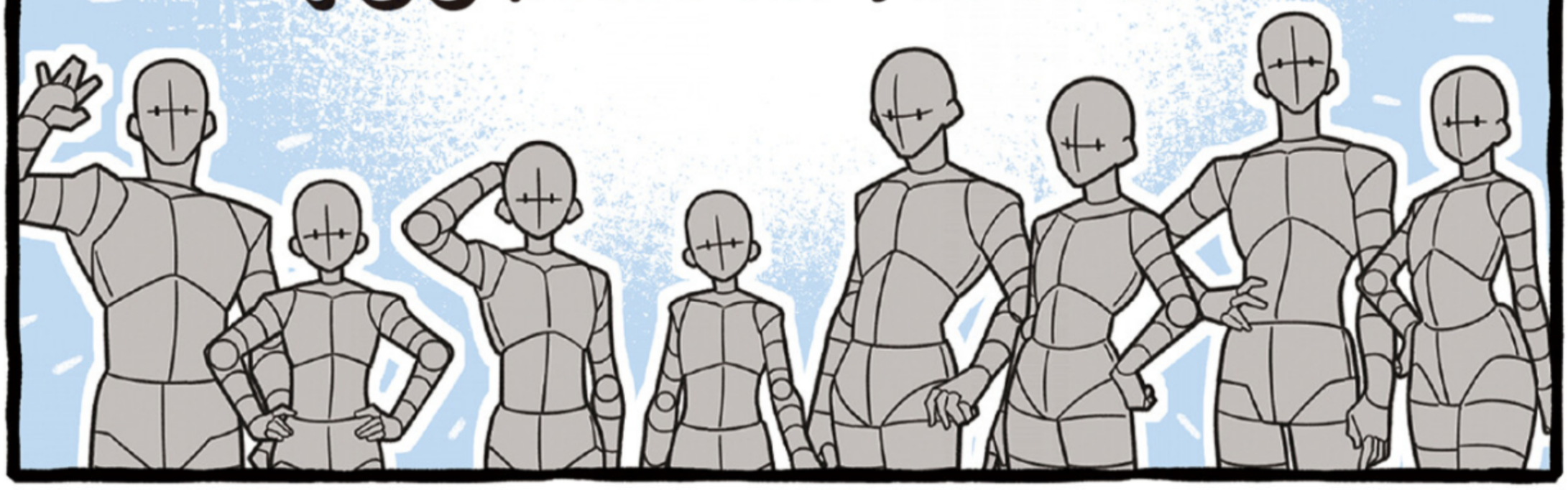


There are character explanations with actual drawings!

It'll help you understand how to draw real characters, and not just poses.



Over 180 poses for you to download!



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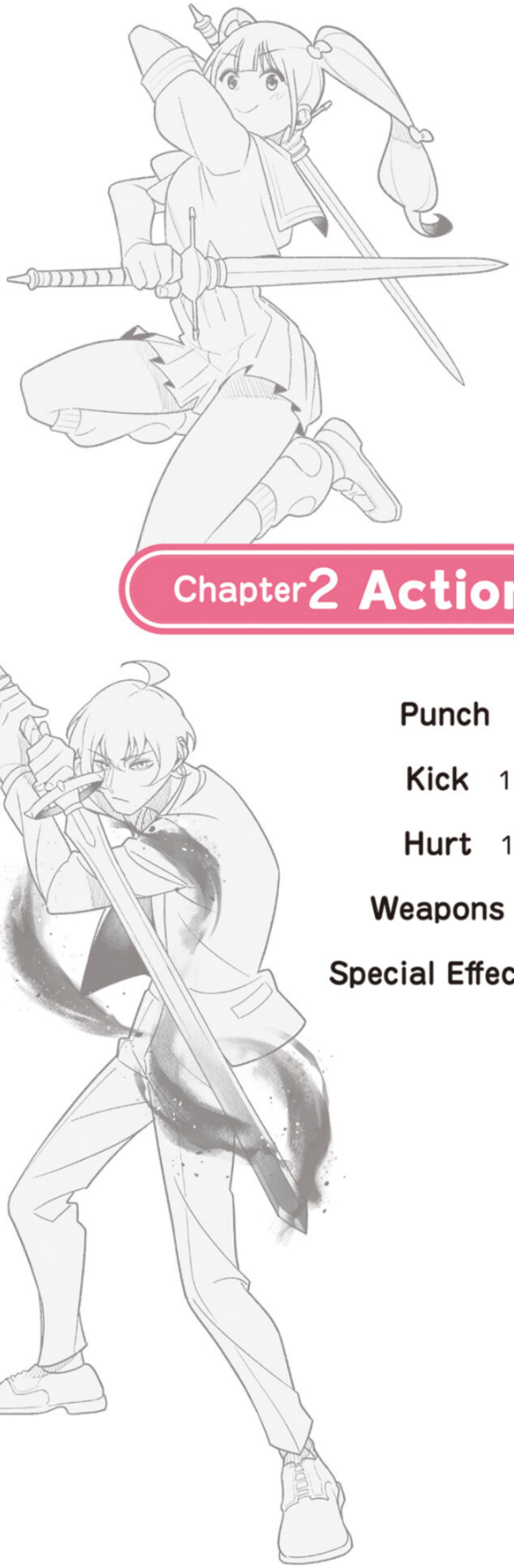

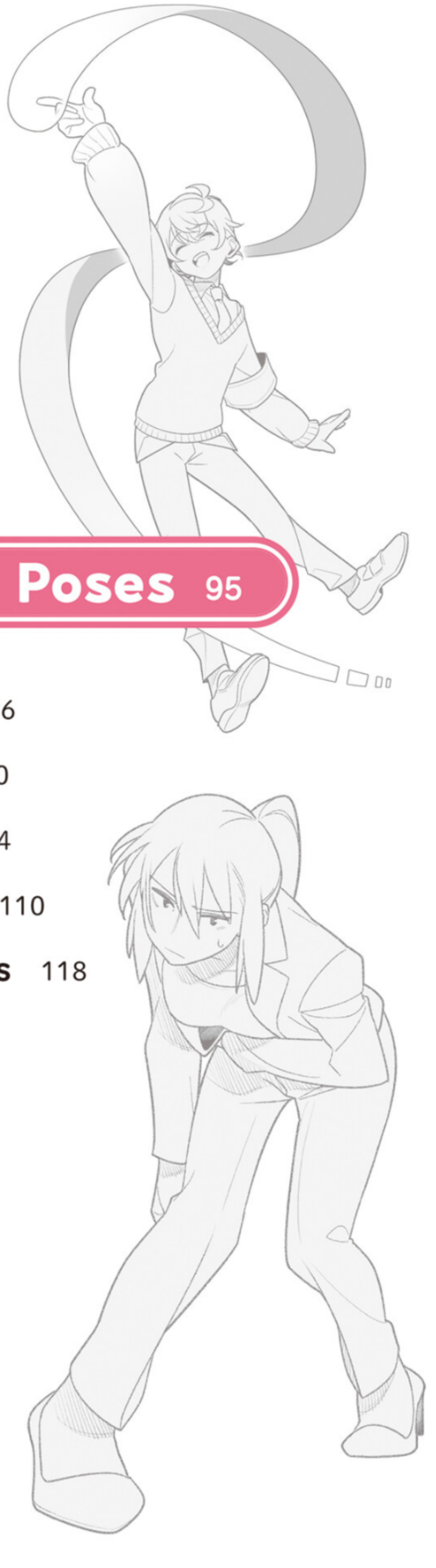

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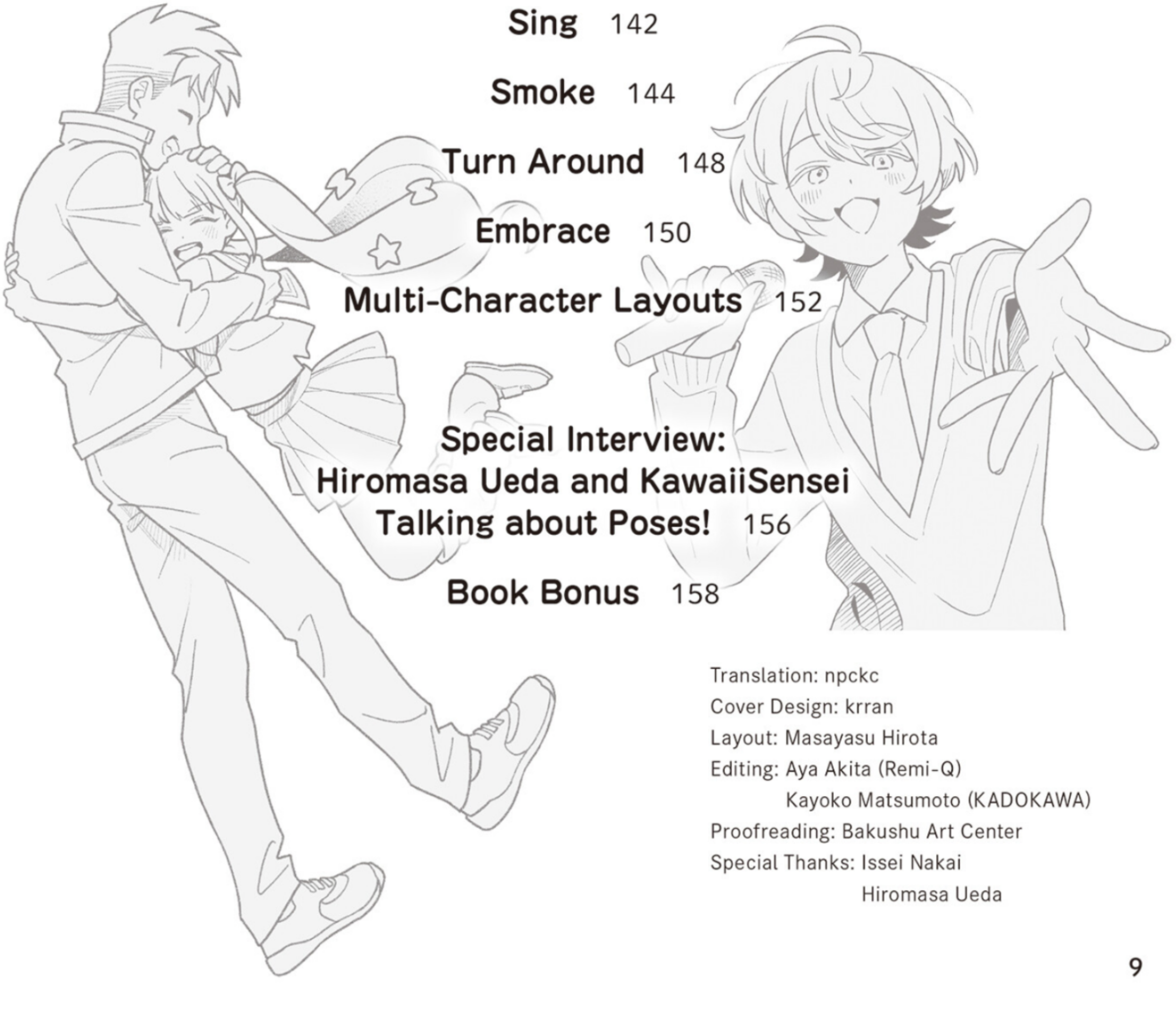

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Hiromasa Ueda

How to Use This Book

This book is for people who want to draw poses better. You can use it to trace and copy poses, but there are also explanations on how to turn the pose examples into actual character drawings.

Introduction

The basic points for drawing poses.

Chapter1: Basic Poses

Basic poses such as standing, walking, and running.

Chapter2: Action Poses

Action poses with movements such as punching and kicking.

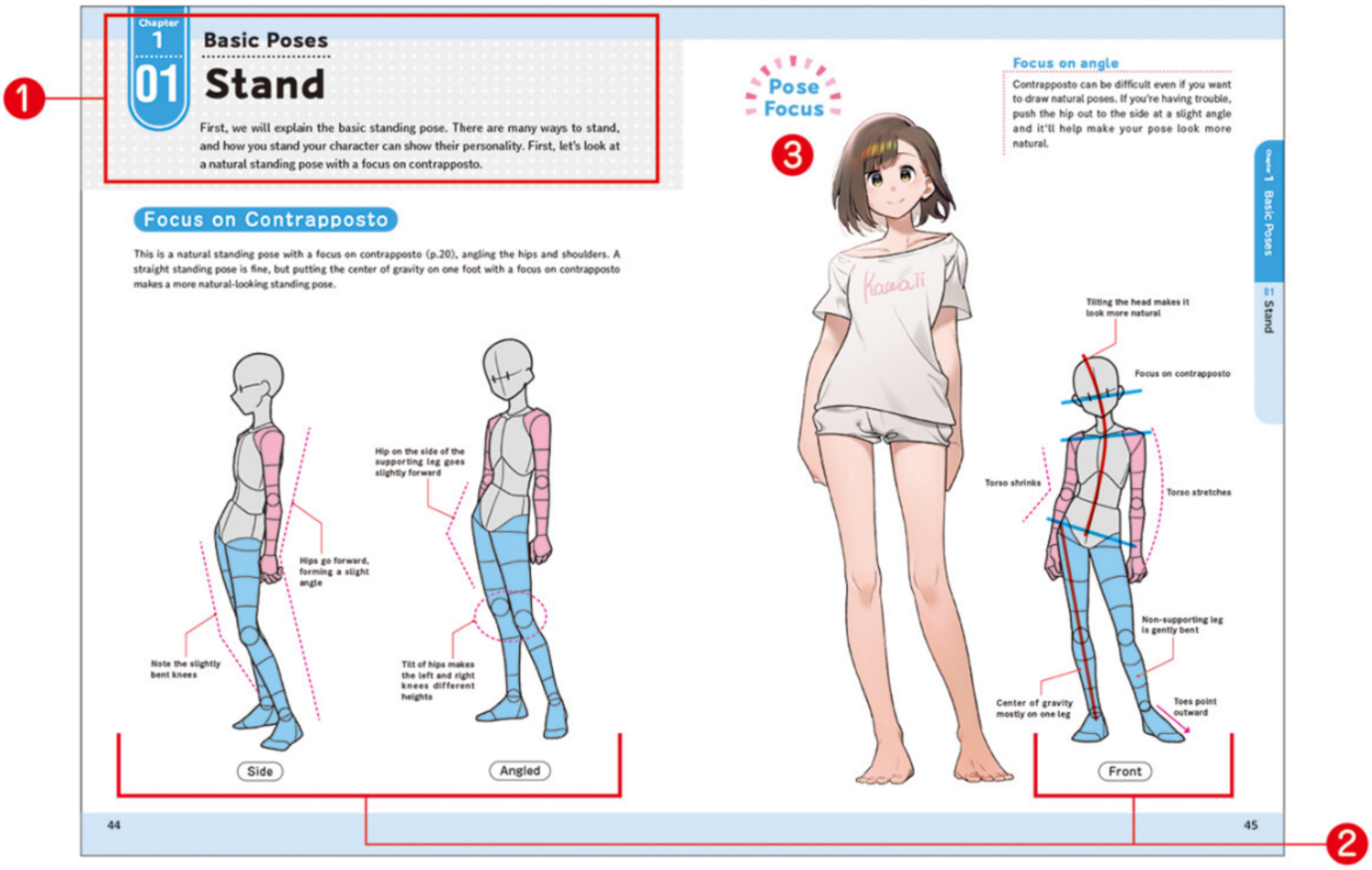
Chapter3: Dramatic Poses

Poses for various scenes, including close-up poses for character art and manga.

Page Layouts

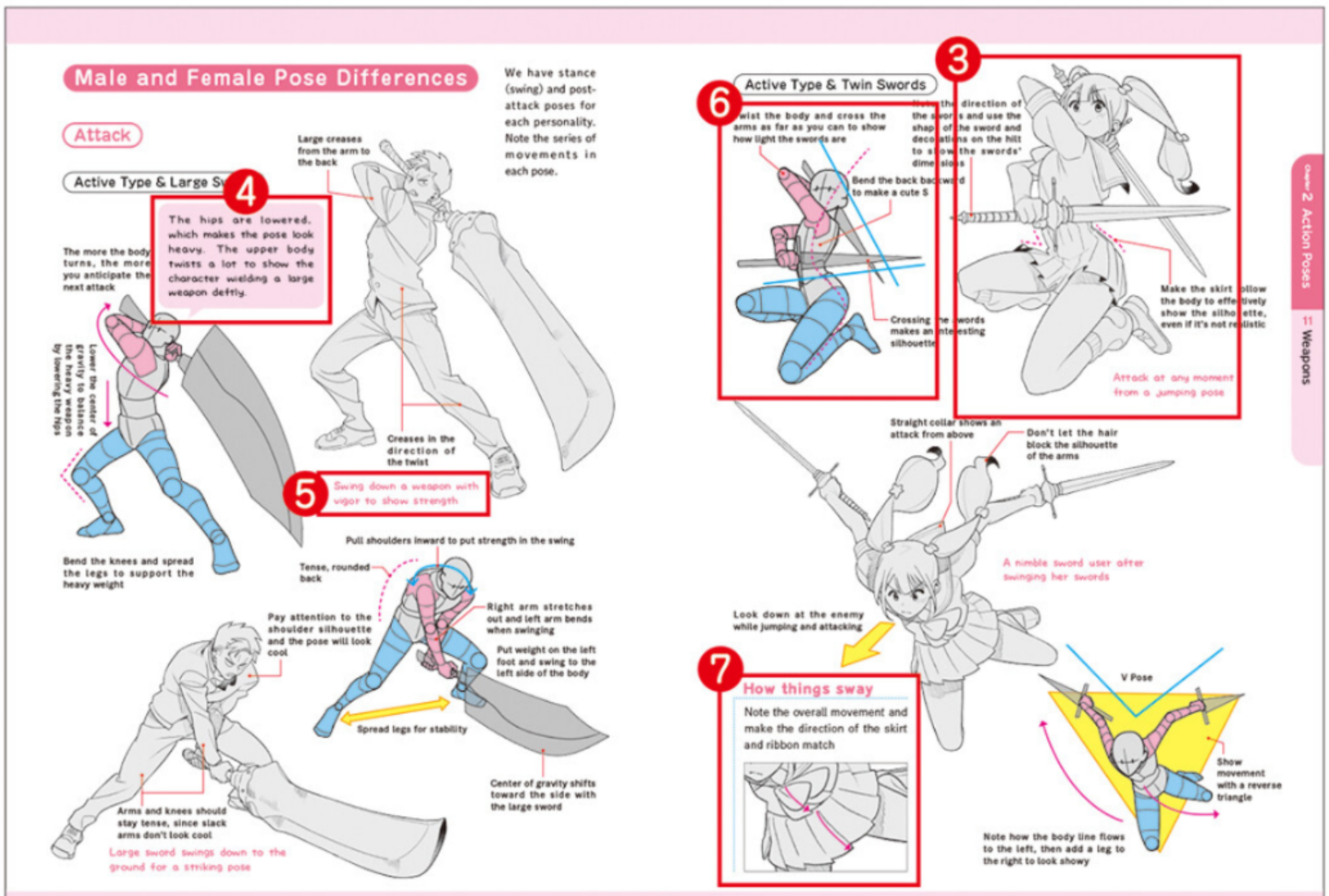
Base Pose

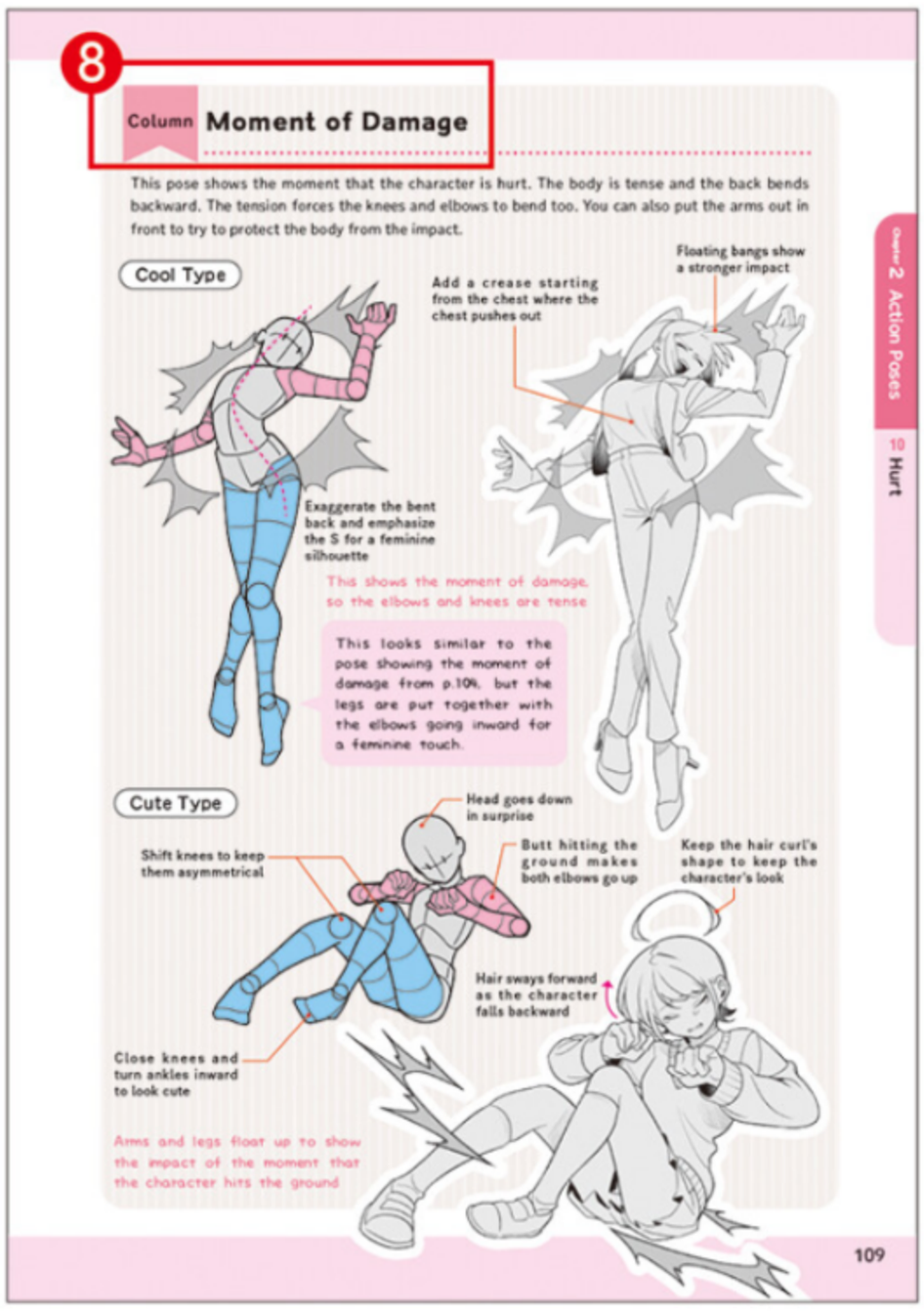
First, there will be an explanation for the base pose, without any focus on character personality or gender.



Gender-Specific Pose

Then, there will be explanations for the pose showing four different characters in both male and female versions. Chapter 3 has characters that match each pose.





❶ **Title**
What content will be explained

❷ **Model**
Pose model from different angles or showing a continuous movement

❸ **Character art**
Example of the pose drawn as a character

❹ **Text bubble**
Tips for drawing the pose

❺ **Pose explanation**
Explanation of the pose

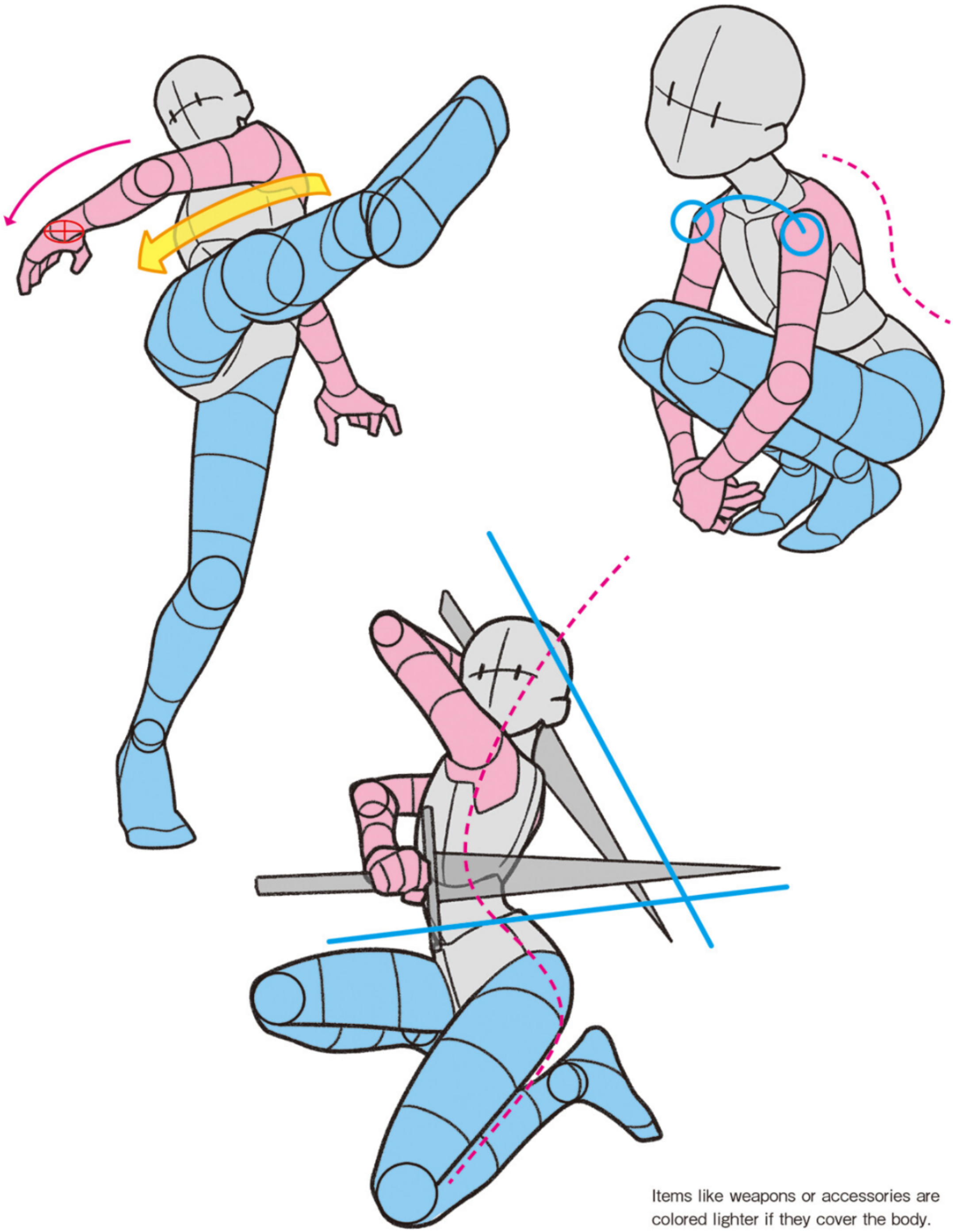
❻ **Model**
Text with lines pointing to the model to give tips

❼ **Pop-out**
Important points for drawing poses and turning them into characters

❽ **Column**
Even more detailed info on how to draw poses

Models

The models are colored in a way that makes it easy to understand where the arms and legs overlap. Check page 14 for more information on the help lines drawn on the models.



Items like weapons or accessories are colored lighter if they cover the body.

0

Introduction

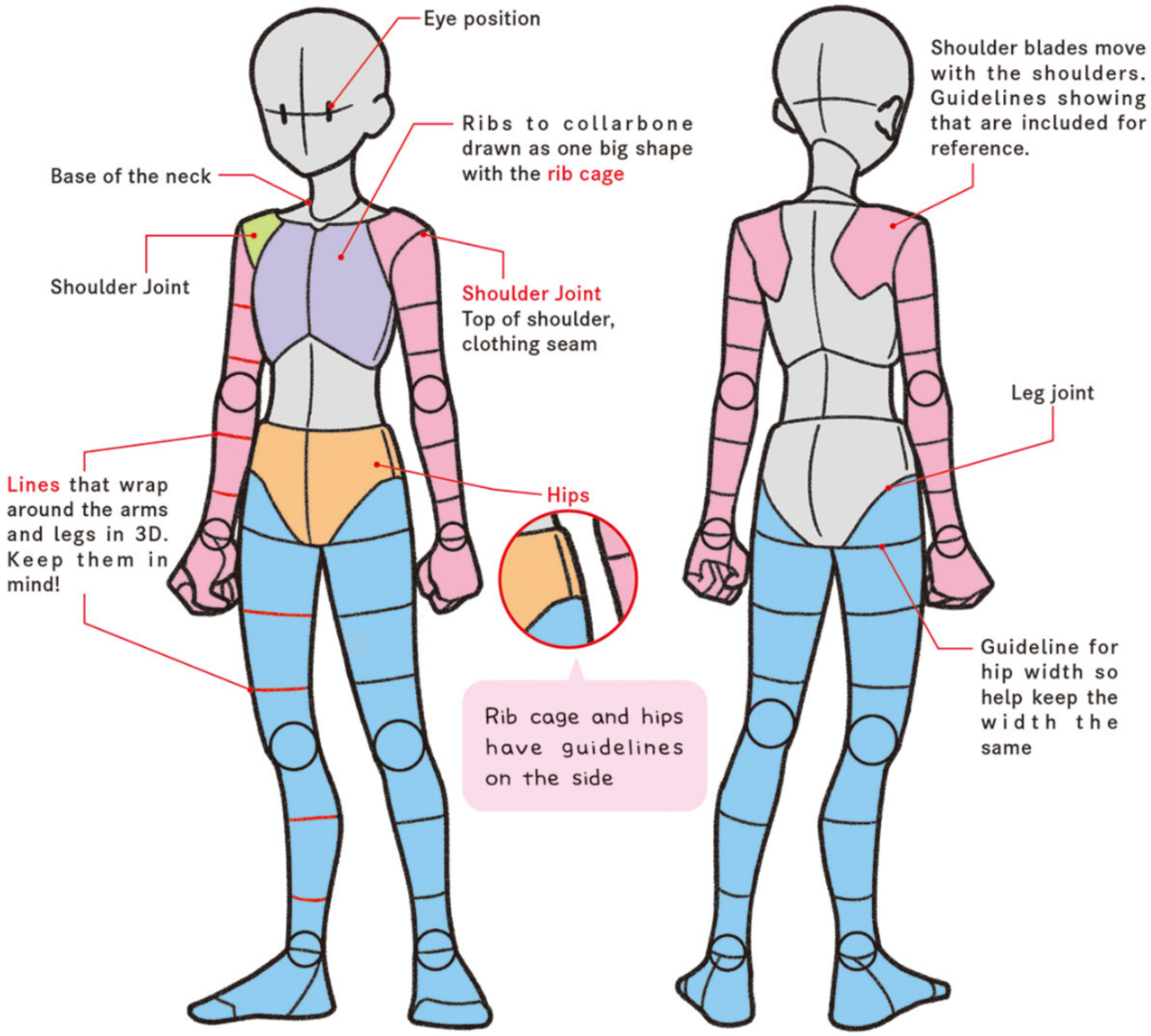
Let's start with explanations of various key points for posing. We'll discuss basics such as the differences between male and female bodies as well as range of motion, while also introducing this book's guides and characters.

Know the Basics

The book's pose models include many points to help you decide on a pose. Don't just trace the poses. Keep the poses' depth and 3D shape in mind and think about how the poses are formed.

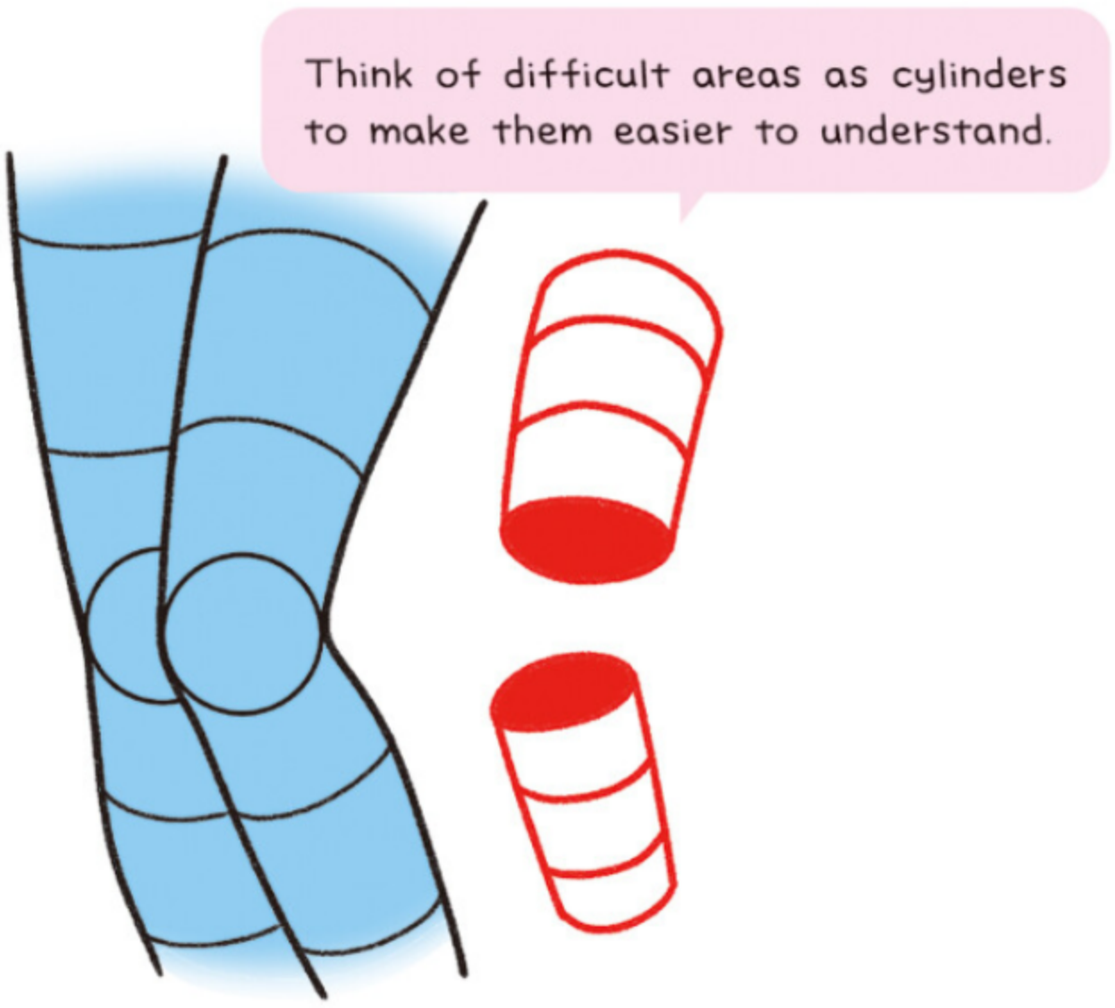
Pose Models

This book is full of characters with different shapes and sizes, but the basic guide for each model is made in the same way. Let's look at the points of the guide.



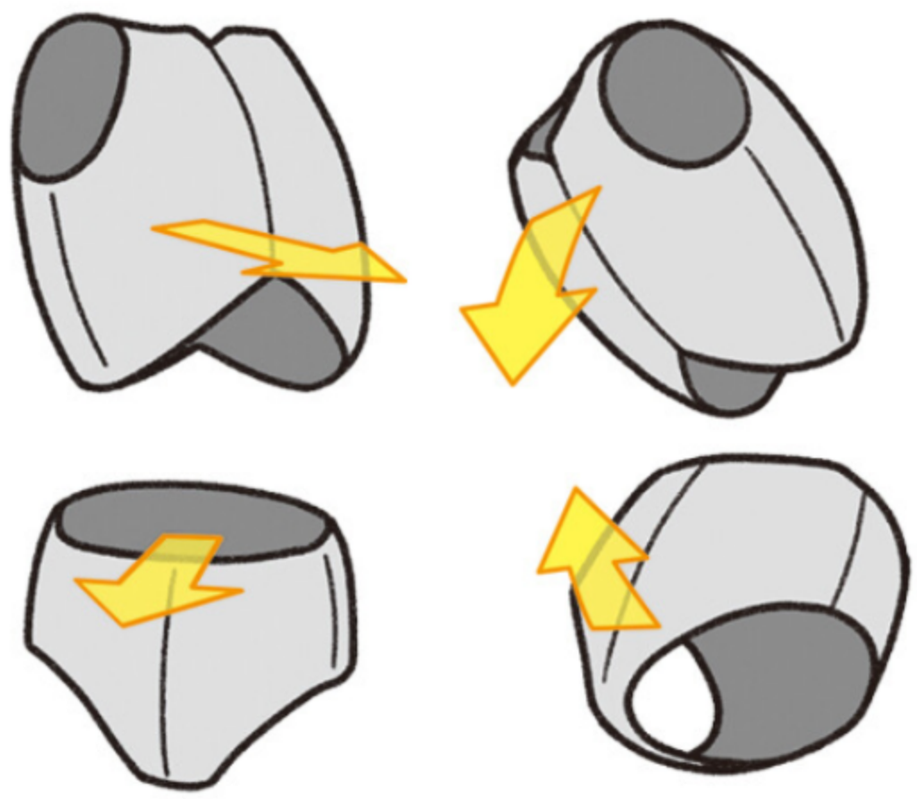
Look for lines that wrap around!

Parts that might look level may actually be tilted. To make your poses look real, make sure to focus on tilt and depth.



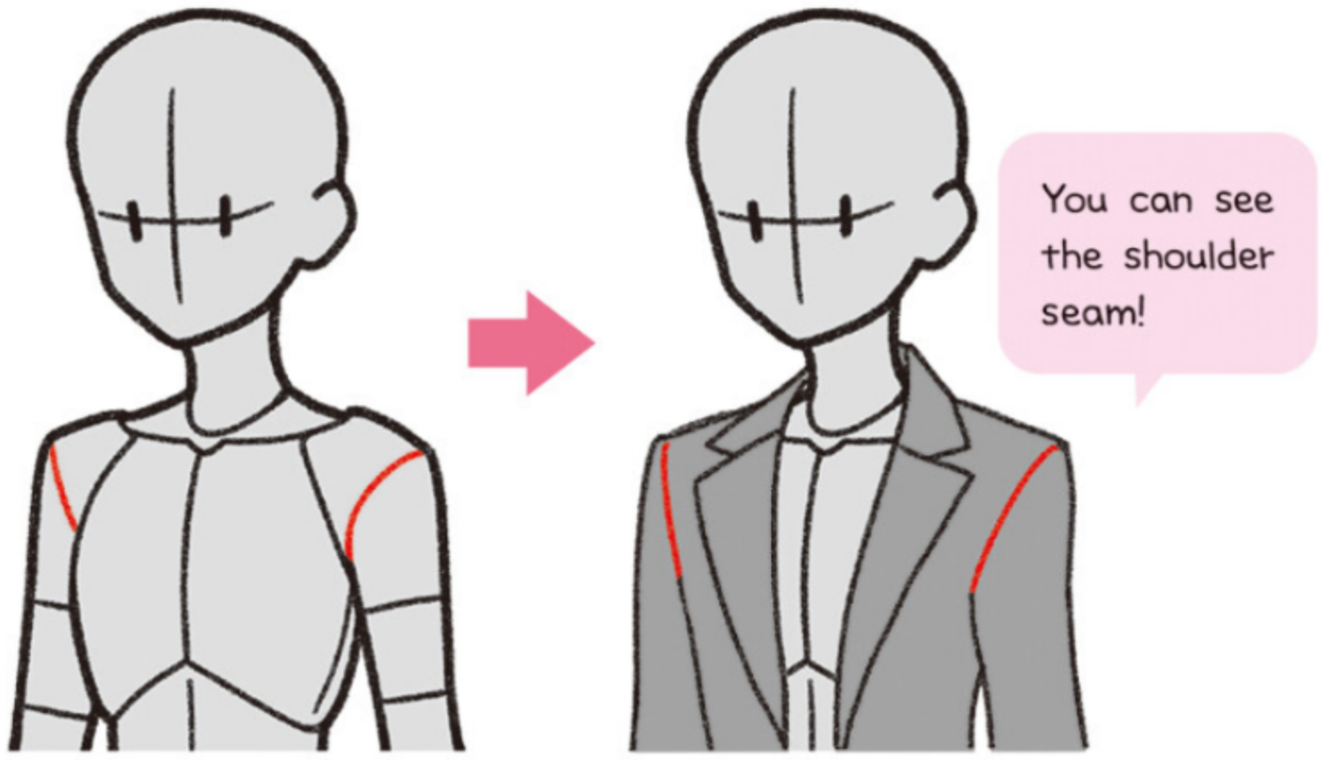
Look at the position of the rib cage and hips!

The direction and tilt of the rib cage and hips vary with different poses. Pay attention to how the body is turned as well as the guidelines on the side.



The shoulder position servs as a guide for clothing!

The top of the shoulder is a good guide for clothing seams. Use it as a reference when putting clothes on your drawing.

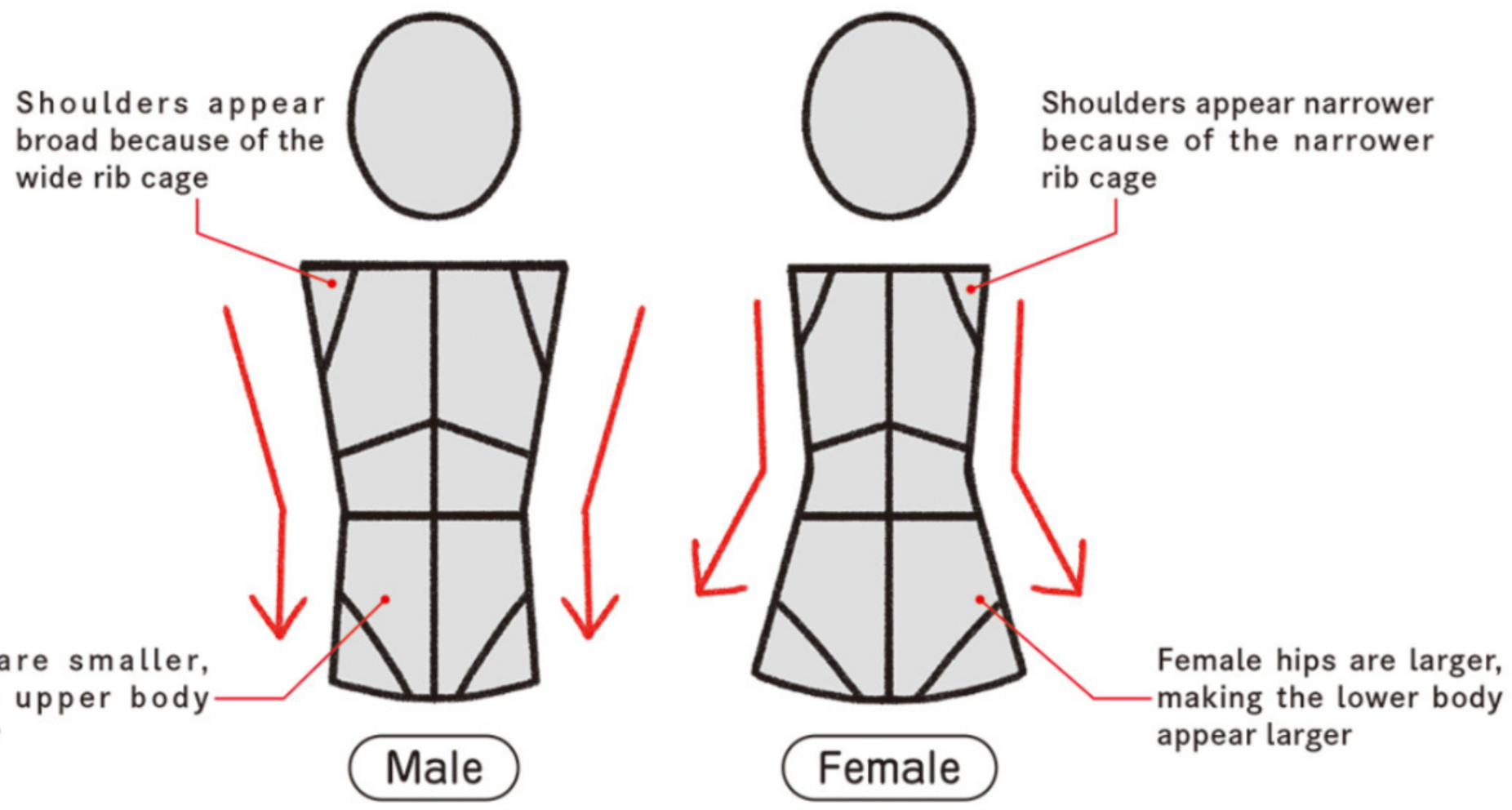


Male and Female Differences

This book has male and female poses with different personalities. In addition to masculine and feminine poses, there are also differences in bone structure and poses that work better or worse. Let's look at the differences.

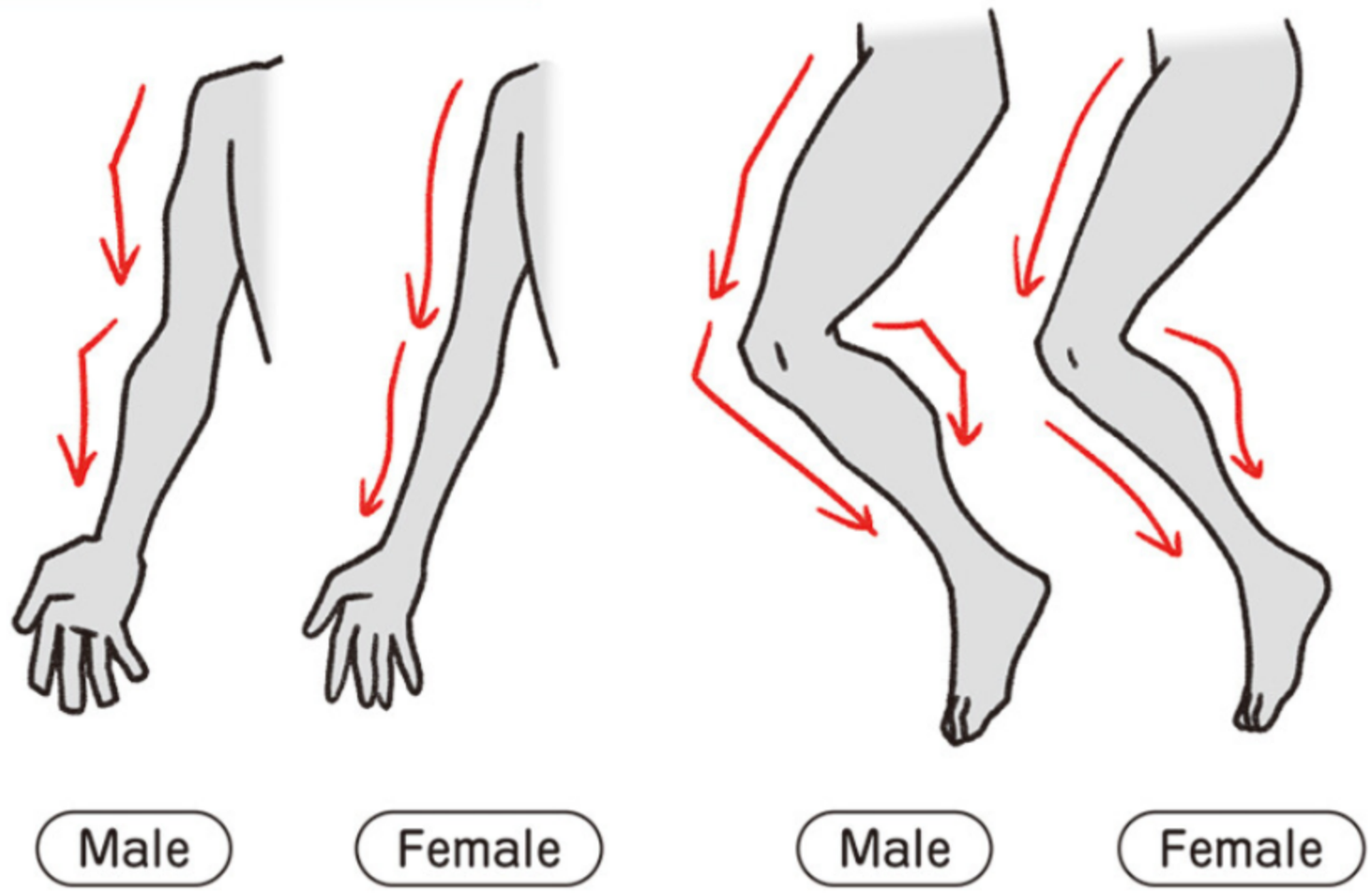
Main Male and Female Difference

There is one area where male and female bodies differ greatly: the size of the rib cage and hips.



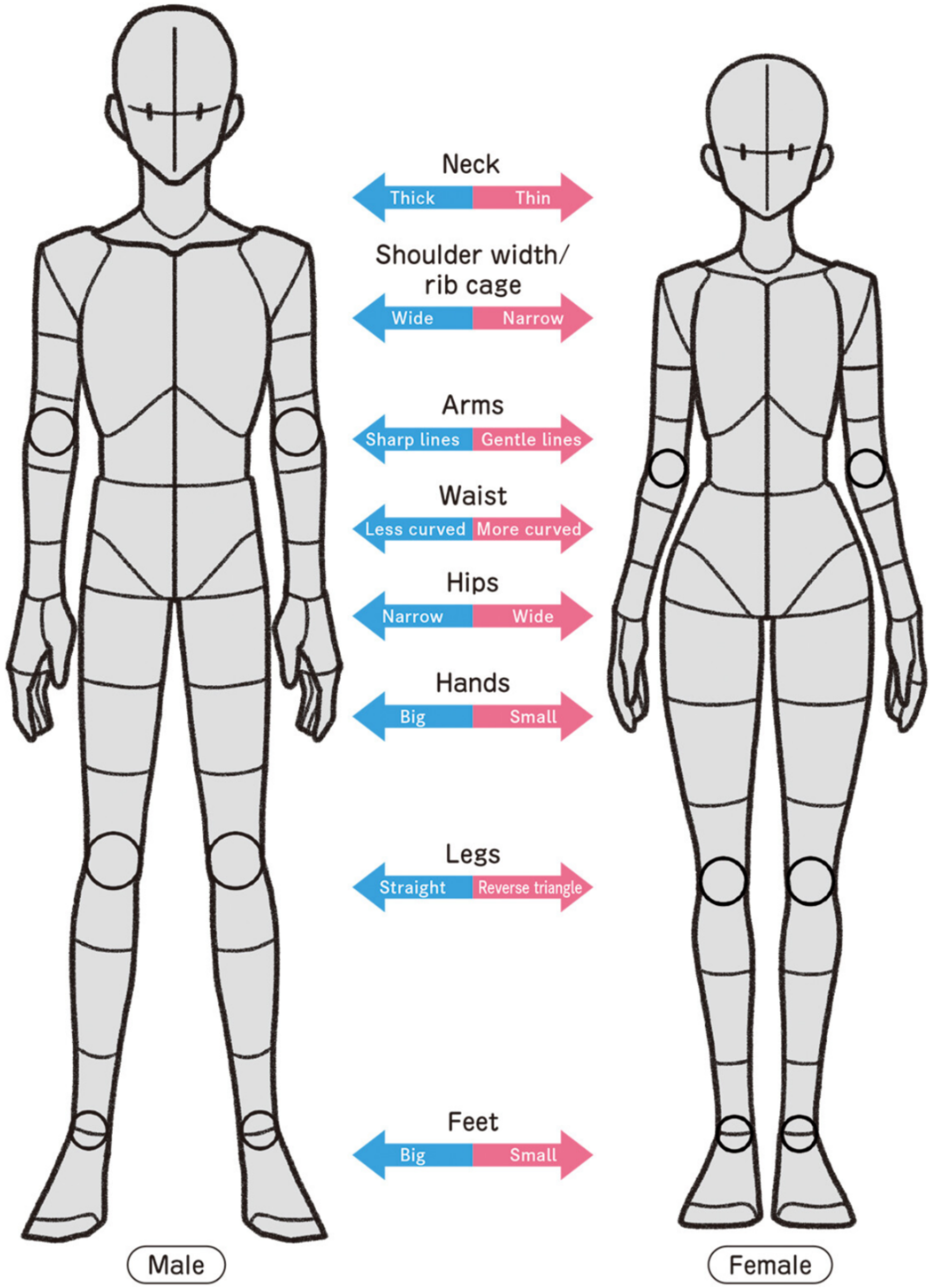
Straight Lines and Curves

Men tend to gain muscle easier while women tend to gain fat easier. Draw men with sharp lines to define each part and women with gentle lines thinner toward the wrists and ankles to make your characters look more convincing. Remember than men have more straight lines, and women more curved lines.



Male and Female Differences

Here is a summary of points that can make a body look masculine and feminine. Keep these in mind when drawing your character. You can also use this for reference to draw gender-neutral characters.

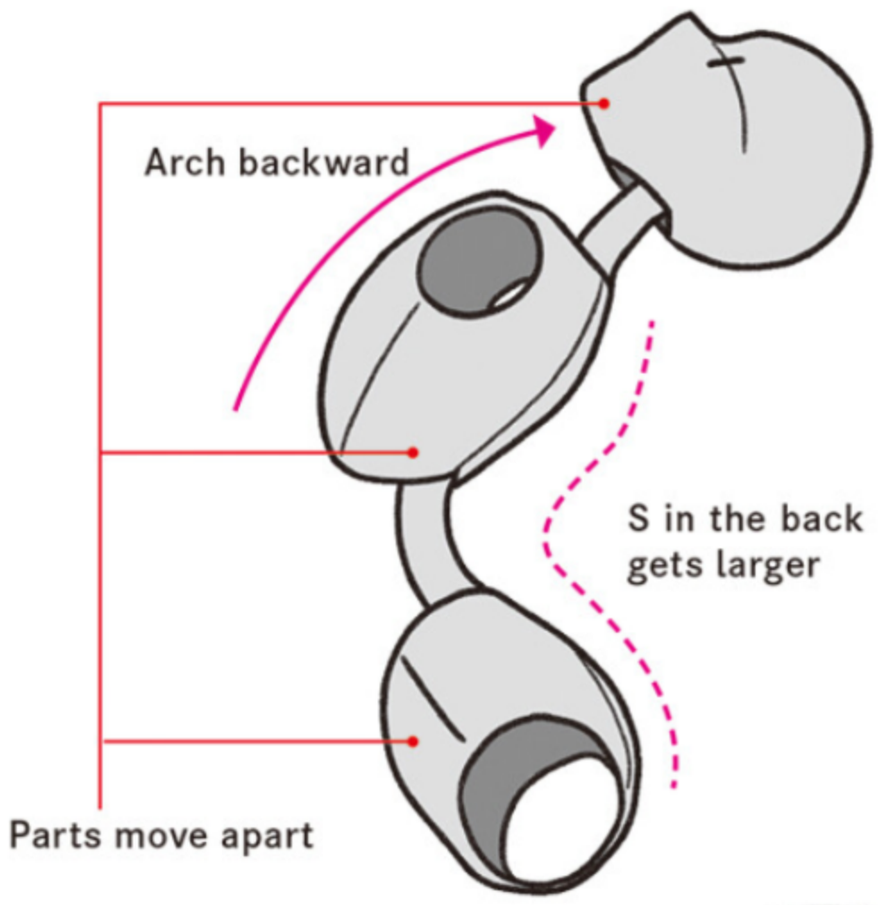


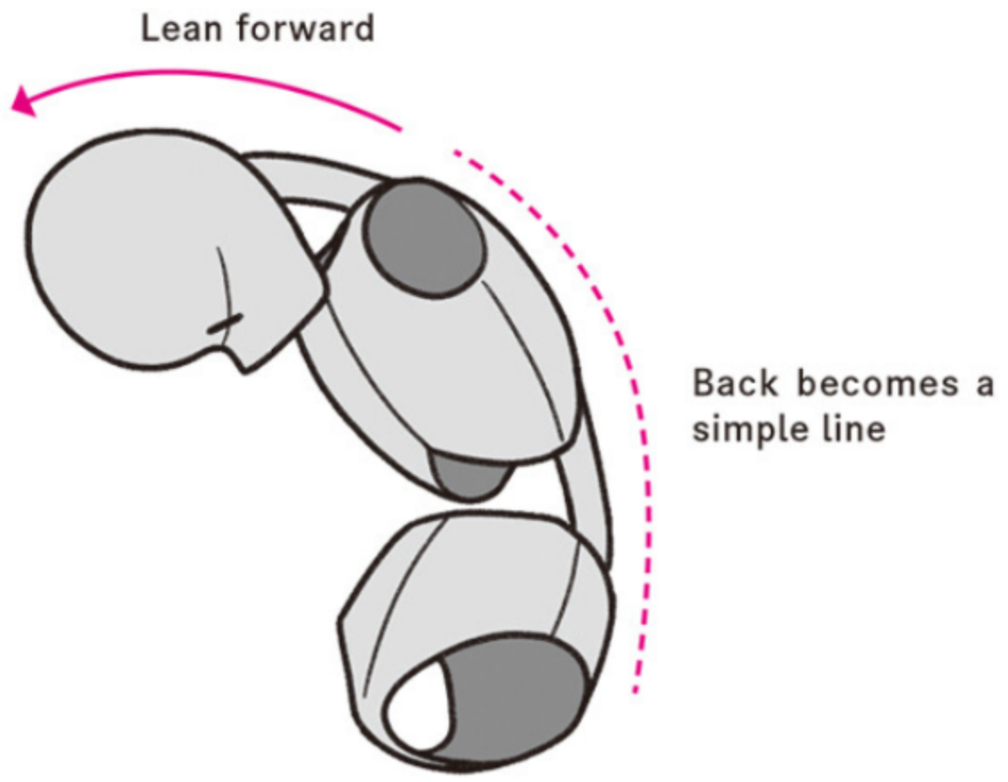
The Body's Range of Motion

You should know how the body's range of motion to draw various poses. How far can the arm rotate? How much can the upper body turn? In general, women have more flexible joints than men. You can also add flavor by deviating from the expected range of motion if you understand it properly.

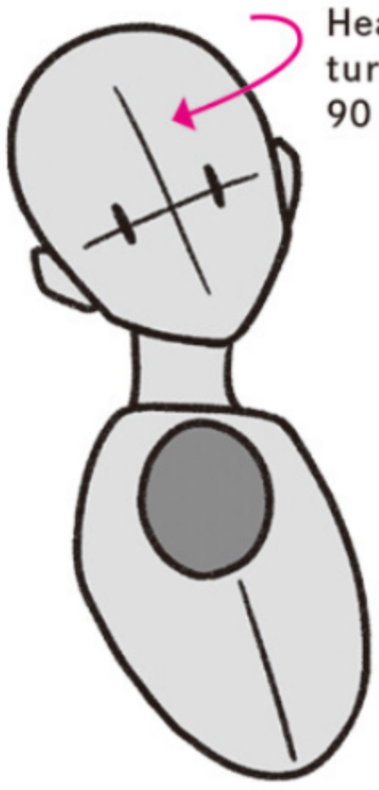
Upper Body Range of Motion

The spine is the reference point for making the back recline and bend forward. When leaning back, the head, rib cage, and pelvis move apart. When bending forward, they move closer together.





When you look to the side, tilting the head in the same direction looks more natural.



Common mistake

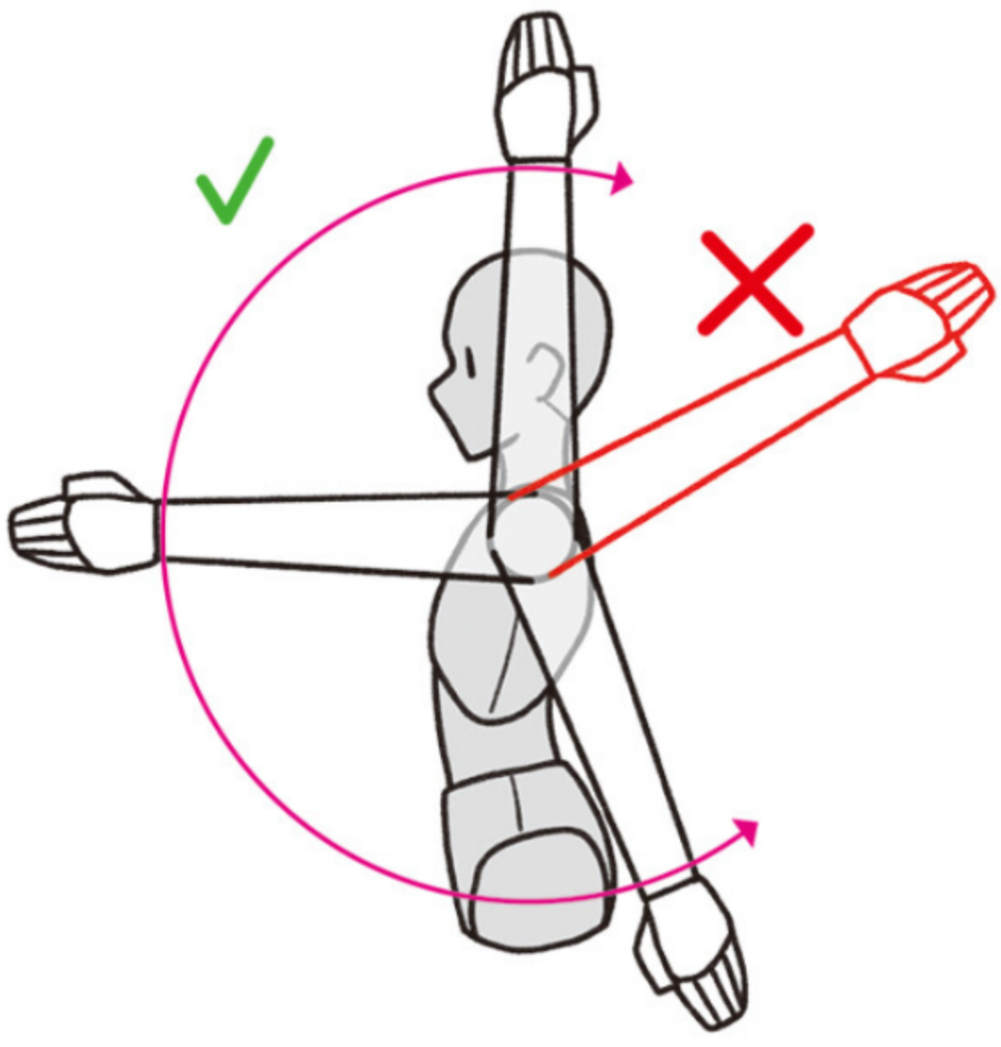
Butt faces forward when upper body and head turned back

OK

It's hard to have both the face and the buttocks face forward. Pay attention to the body's range of motion!

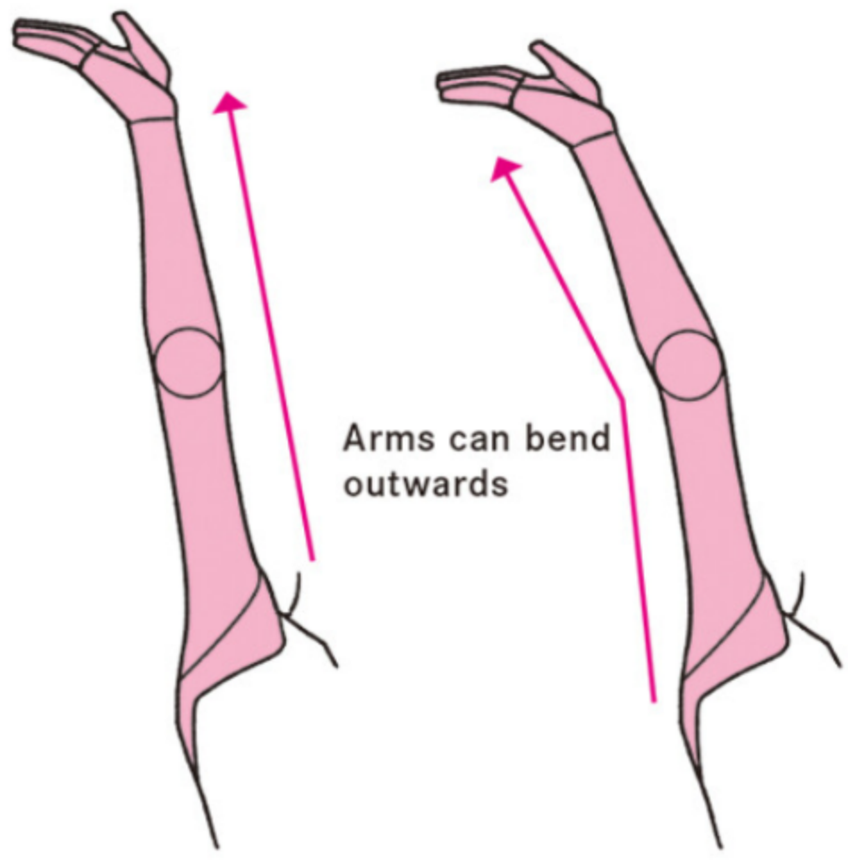
Arm Range of Motion

Arms can rotate freely in front of the body, but they can't rotate diagonally to the back.



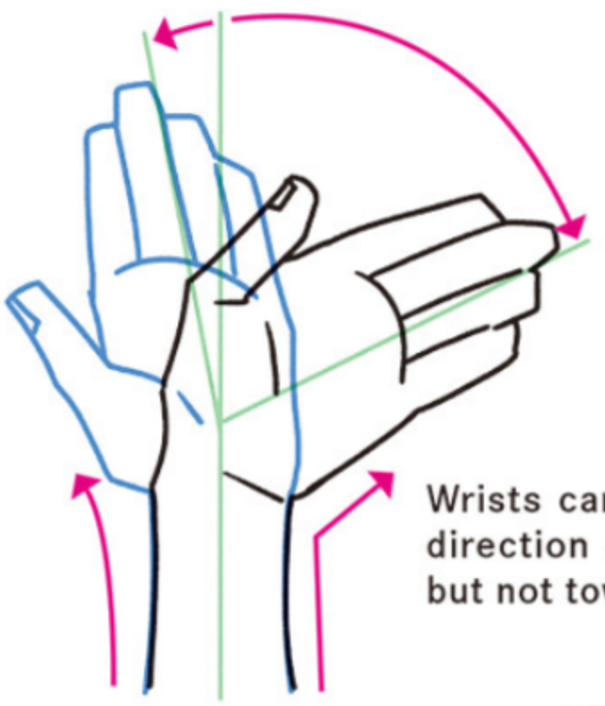
Arms don't bend outwards?

The arm is straight when extended, but some people's arms bend outwards beyond 180 degrees. This is common in women and can be used to express a feminine look in your drawing.



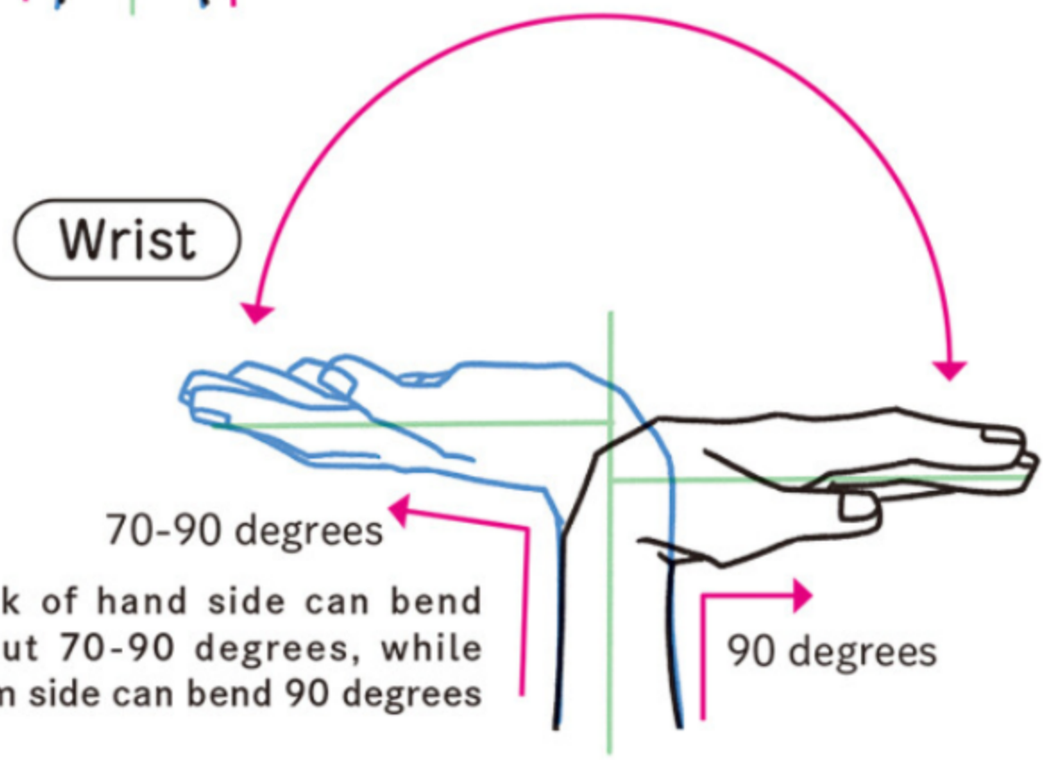
Wrist and Ankle Range of Motion

Finally, let's take a look at the range of motion for wrists and ankles.

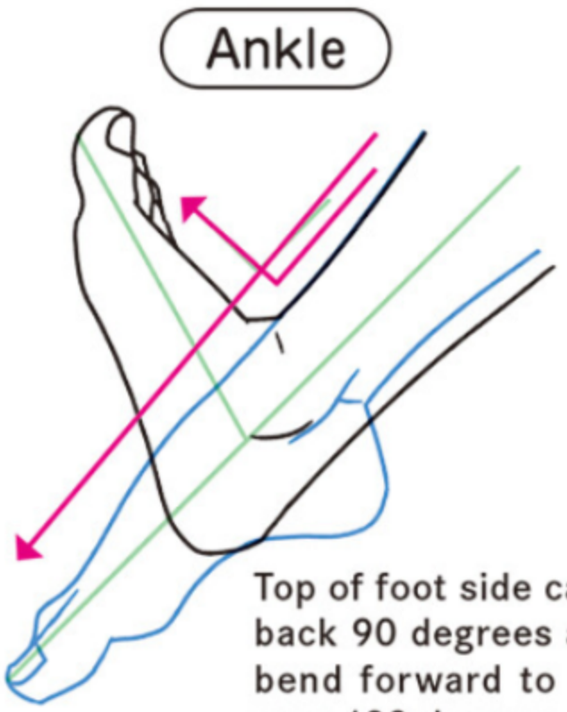


Wrists can bend a lot in the direction of the little finger, but not toward the thumb.

Ankles can bend a lot in the direction of the big toe, but not toward the little toe.



Back of hand side can bend about 70-90 degrees, while palm side can bend 90 degrees



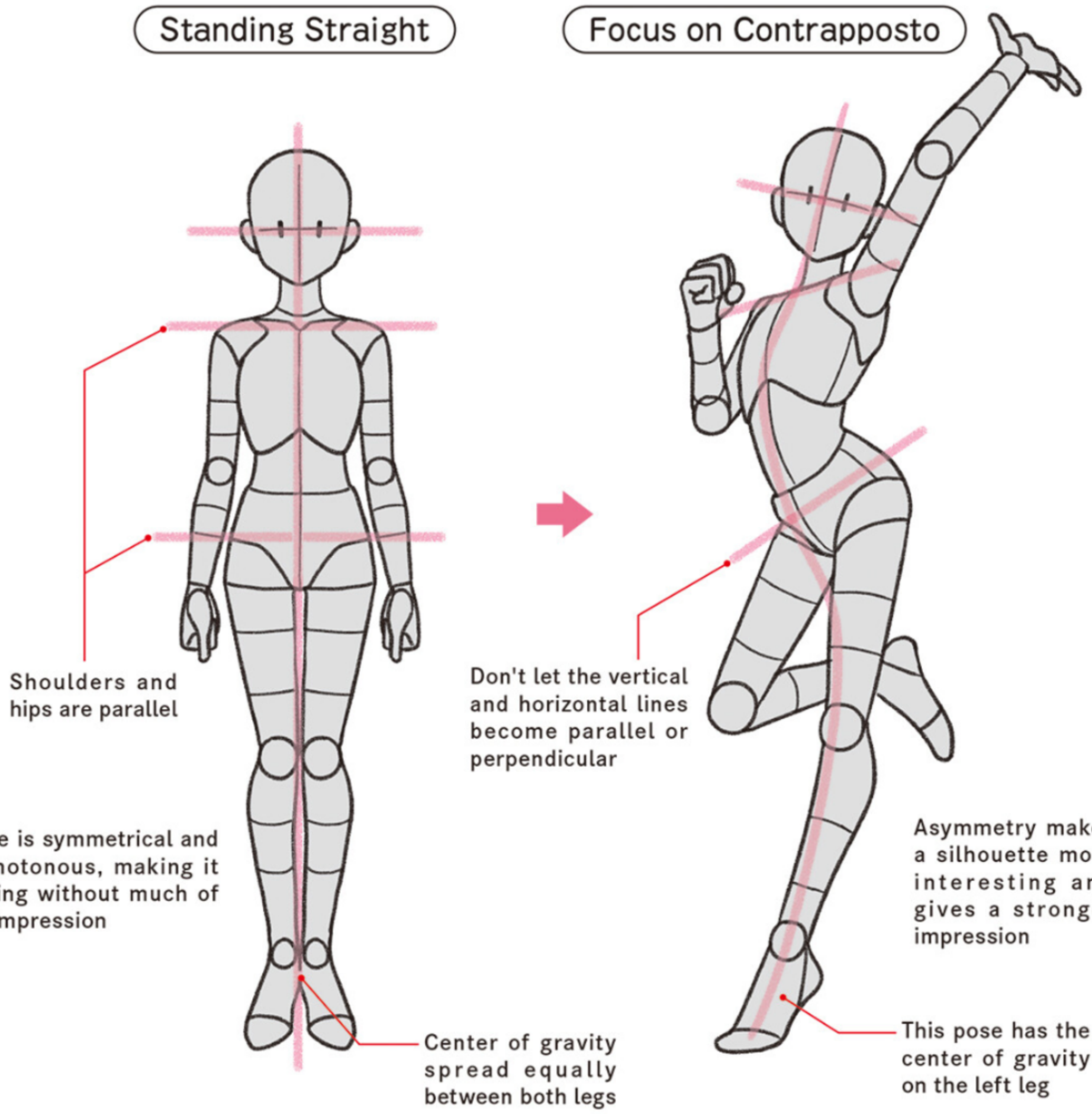
Top of foot side can bend back 90 degrees and can bend forward to slightly over 180 degrees

Contrapposto

Learning about contrapposto can help you draw the body in captivating poses. Just paying attention to contrapposto will make your poses much more convincing.

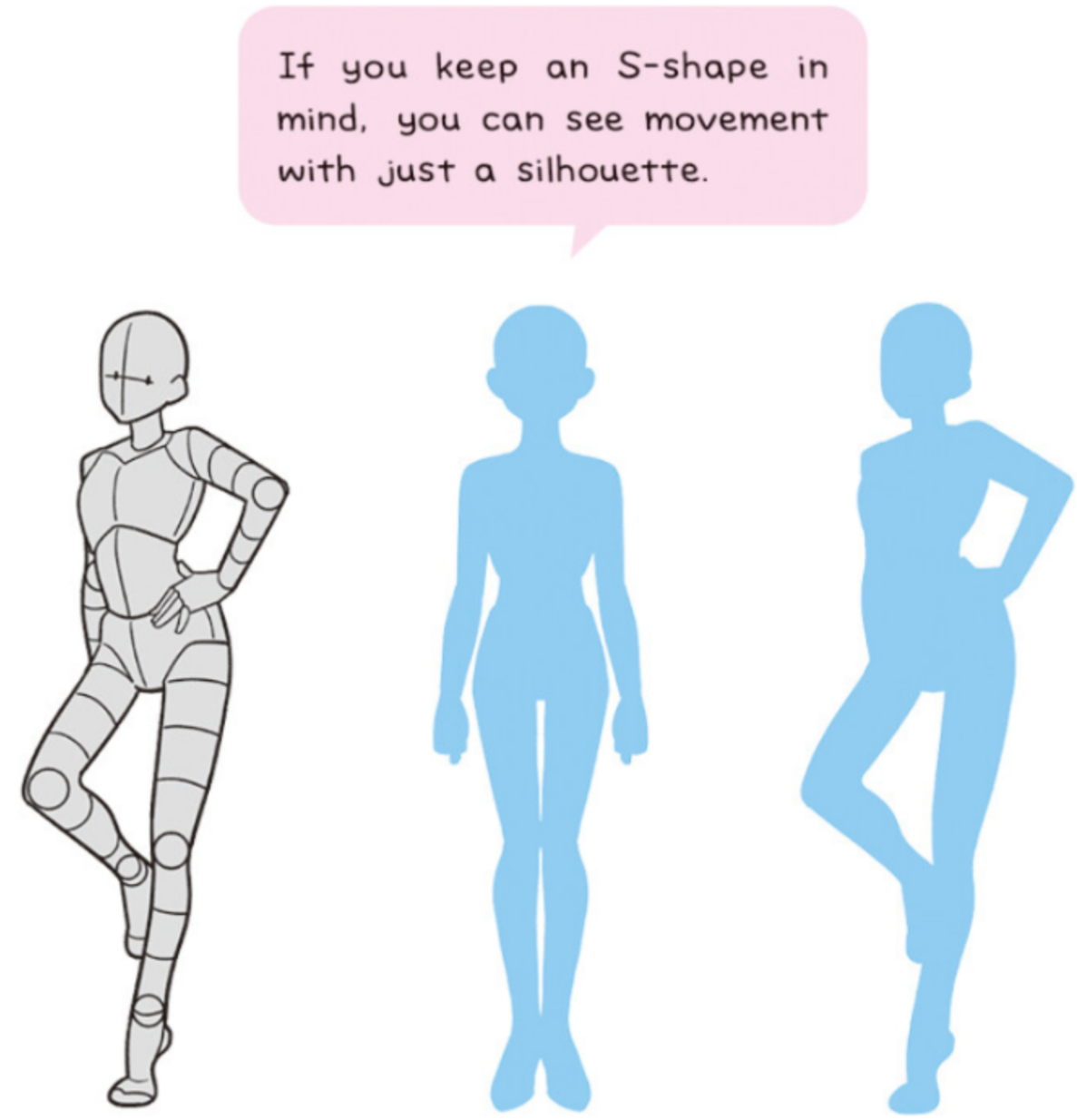
What is Contrapposto?

Contrapposto is a term used to describe art depicting a figure standing with most of the center of gravity on one leg. When the center of gravity is one leg, the hip on that side will go up. Paying attention to contrapposto creates asymmetry which helps a pose flow and look more attractive.



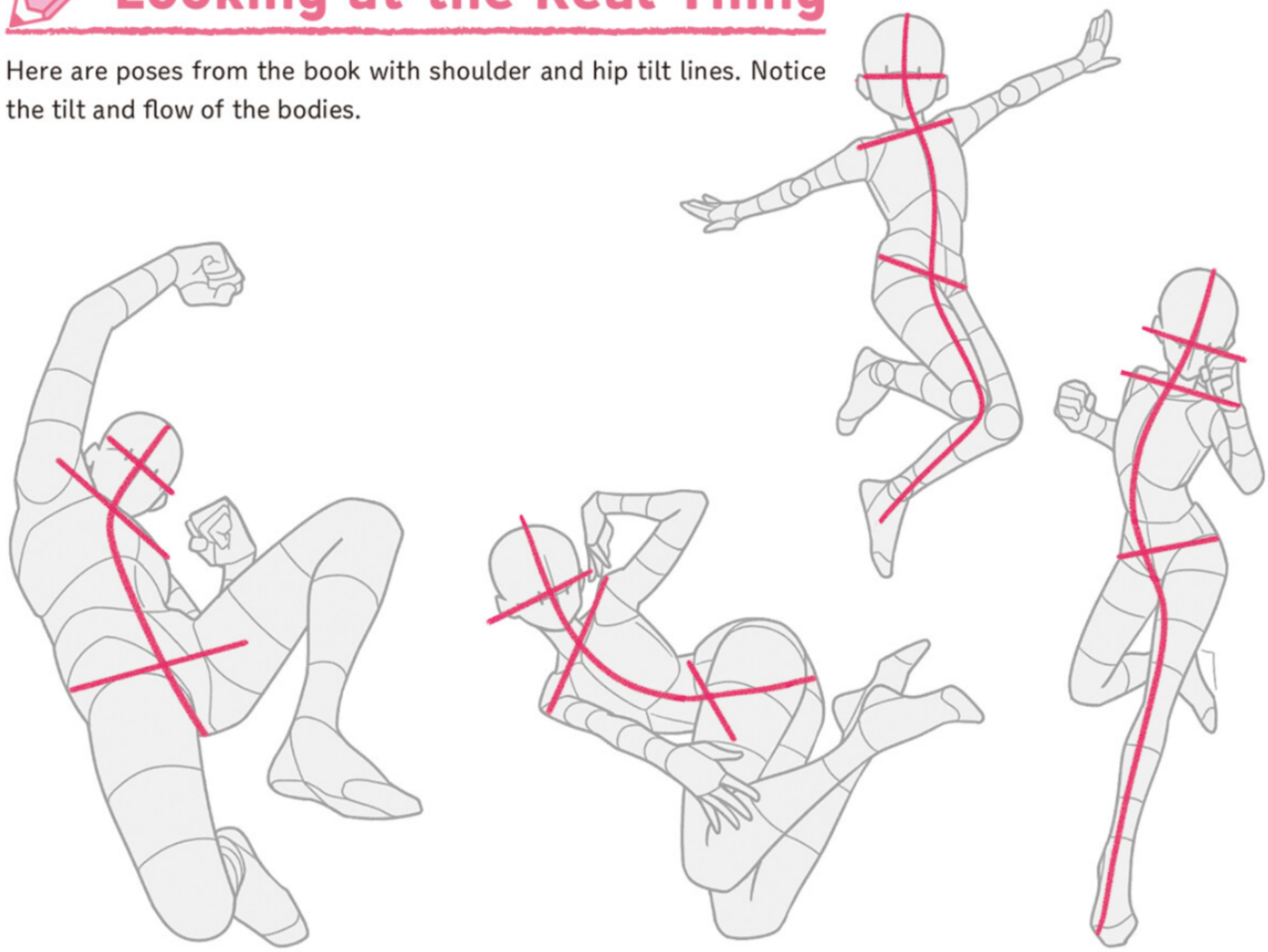
Focus on the S

When you focus on contrapposto, it makes the shoulders and hips tilt, which makes the body form an S. Paying attention to the S can help make dynamic poses.



Looking at the Real Thing

Here are poses from the book with shoulder and hip tilt lines. Notice the tilt and flow of the bodies.

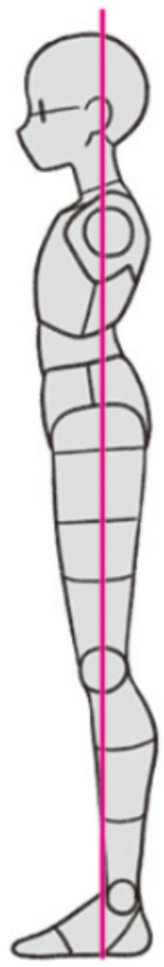


Center of Gravity

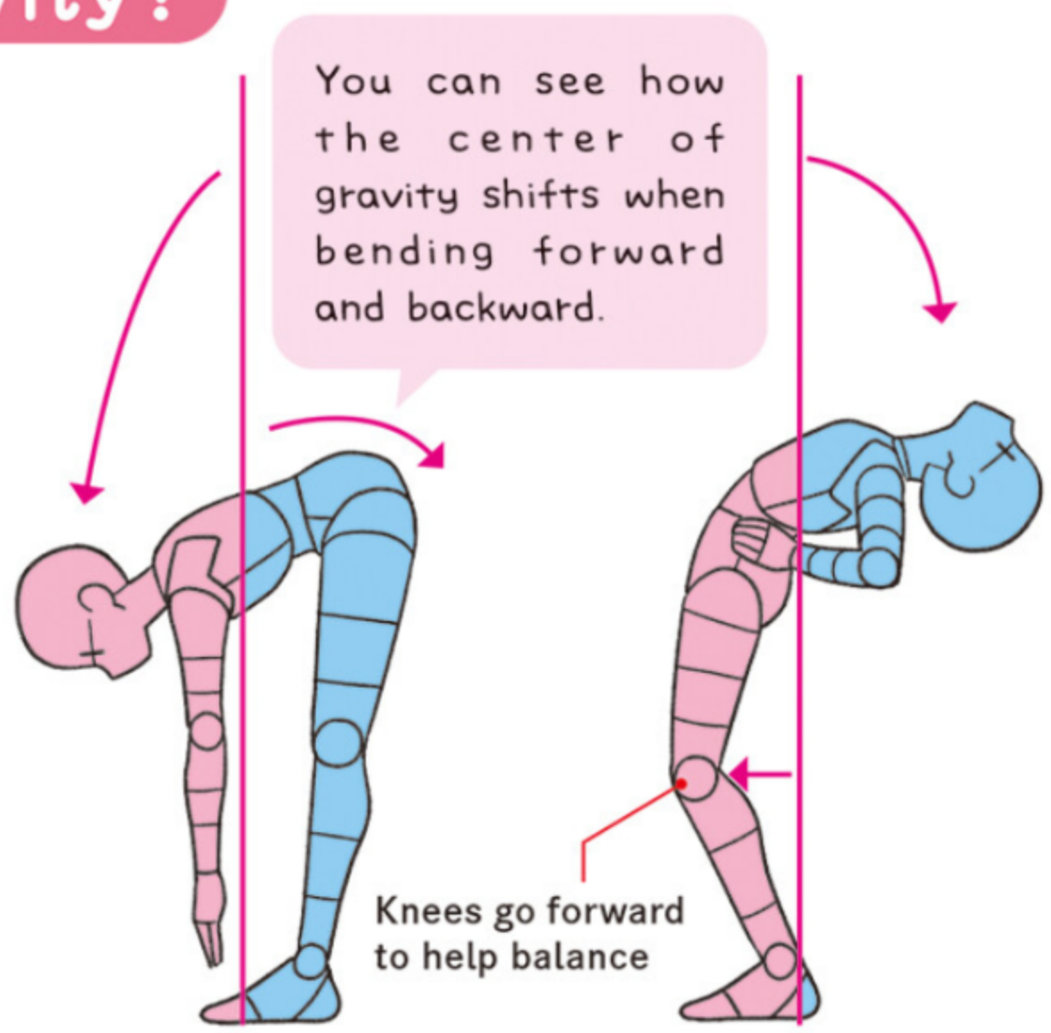
Drawing center of gravity well makes poses more convincing. Note where the center of gravity is located on the body and where the body connects to the ground.

What is Center of Gravity?

If the center of gravity is in the wrong place, the pose will look off, like it is defying gravity. Understanding center of gravity helps balance and ground a pose. Imagine a straight pole running from the top of the head to the groin in straight standing poses.



Center of gravity in the center of the body when standing straight

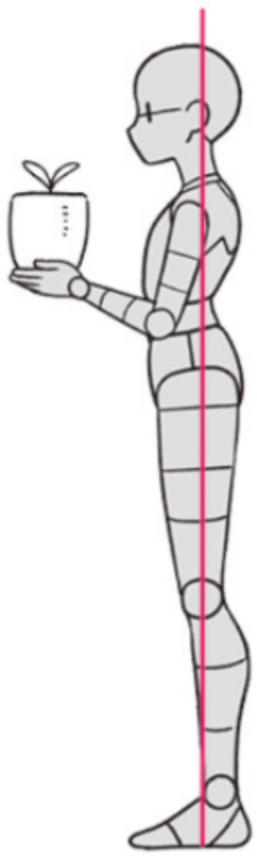


Toes become center of gravity when bending forward to support the upper body

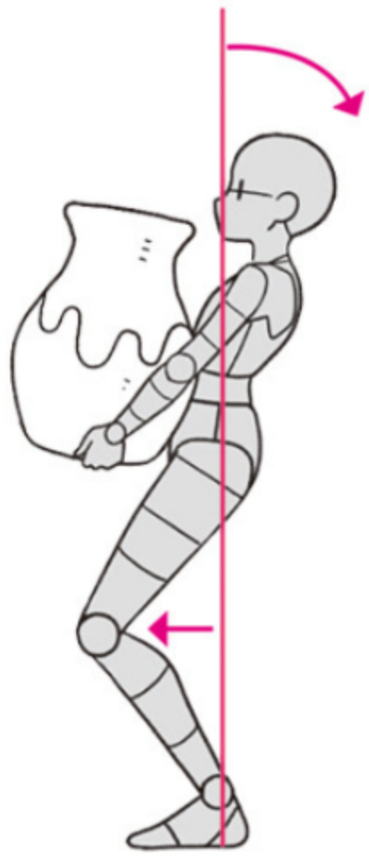
Similarly, heels become center of gravity when bending backward to support the upper body

Holding Objects and Center of Gravity

When you hold an object, the position of the center of gravity includes both the body and the held object. The center of gravity will change depending on the weight of the object.



Straight with a light object



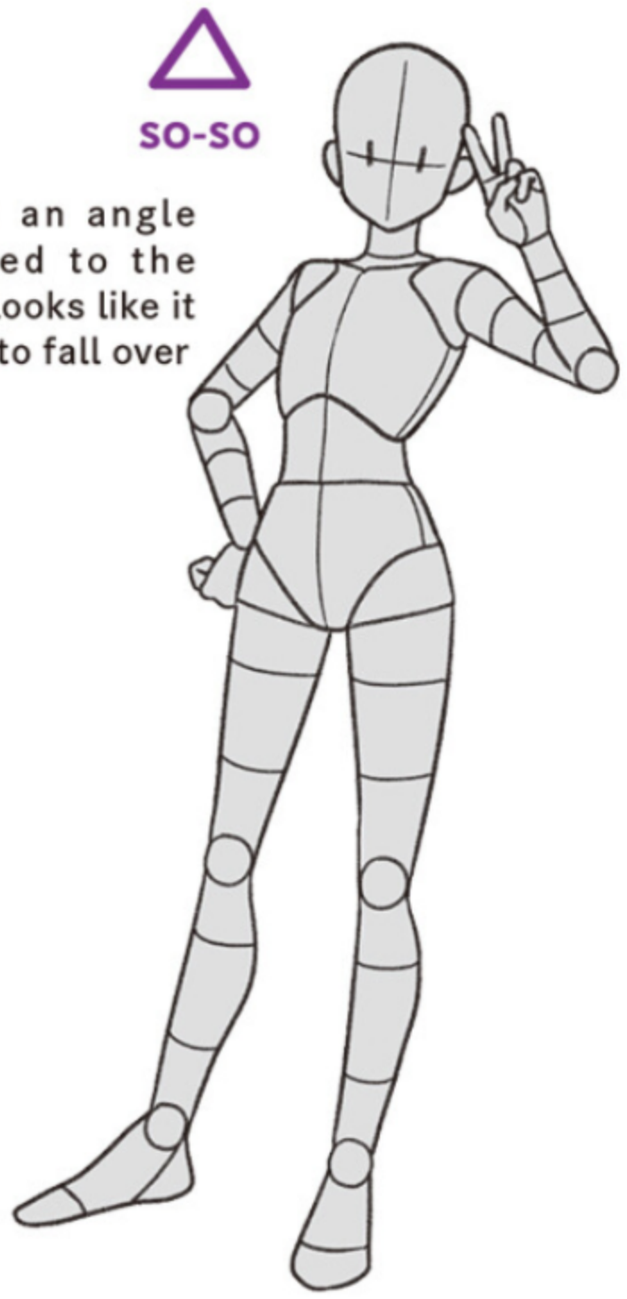
Upper body tilts backward to balance a heavy object held in front

Standing on Ground

Posing characters like they are not actually standing on the ground is a common mistake. You need to properly visualize the center of gravity when making a character stand.

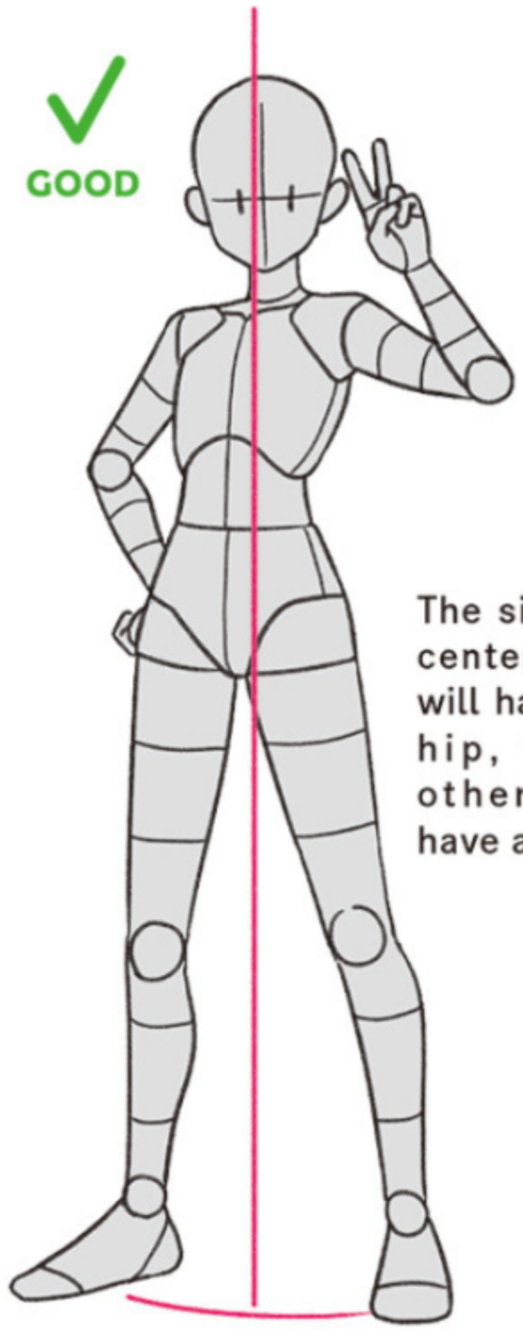
△
SO-SO

Body at an angle compared to the ground, looks like it is about to fall over



Hard to tell where the center of gravity is

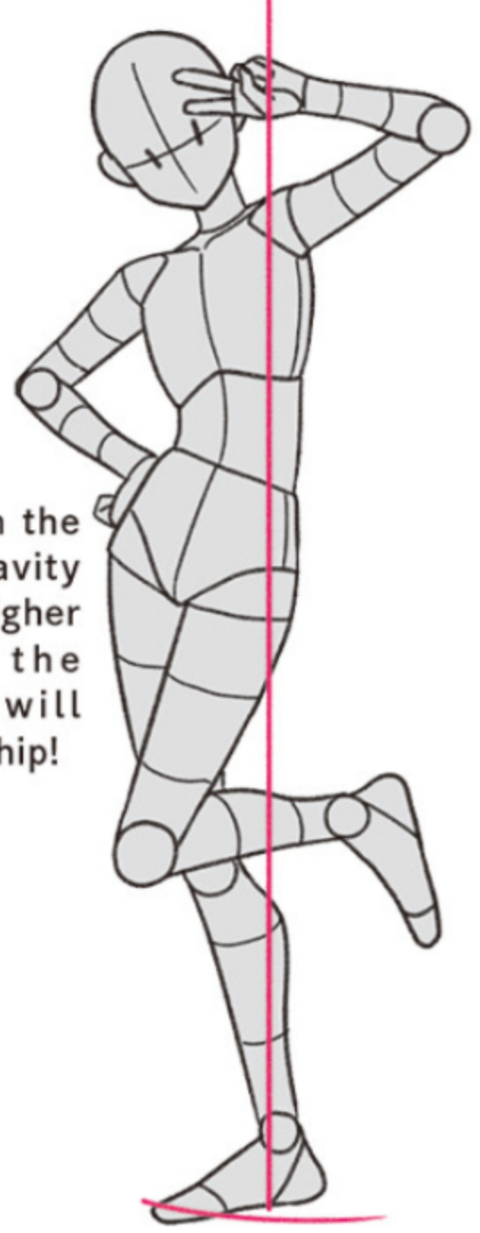
✓
GOOD



Center of gravity in the center

Make sure to keep center of gravity in mind even in poses with contrapposto

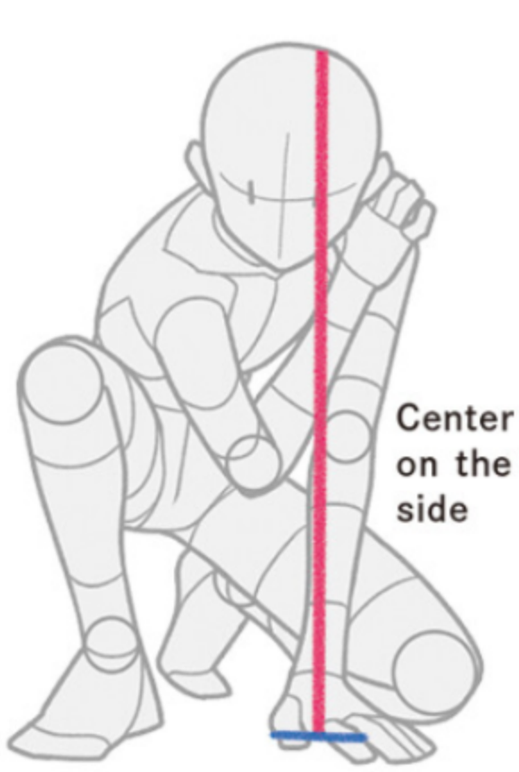
The side with the center of gravity will have a higher hip, while the other side will have a lower hip!



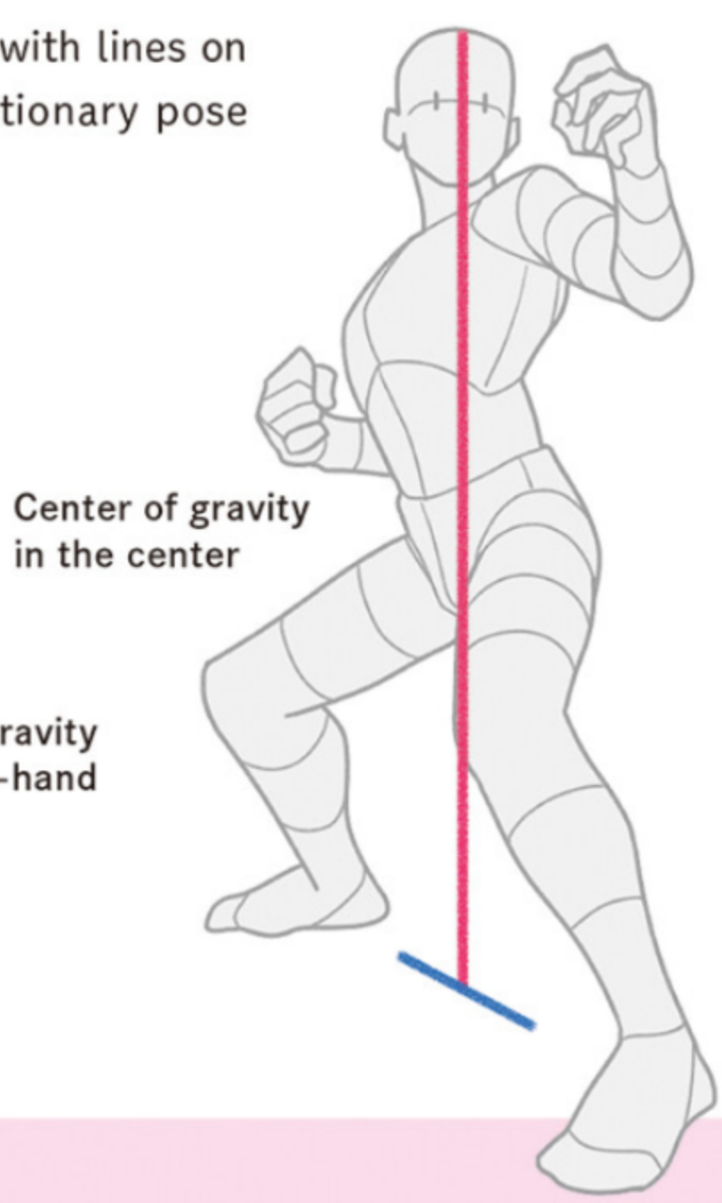
This drawing has the center of gravity on the right leg and hip!

Looking at the Real Thing

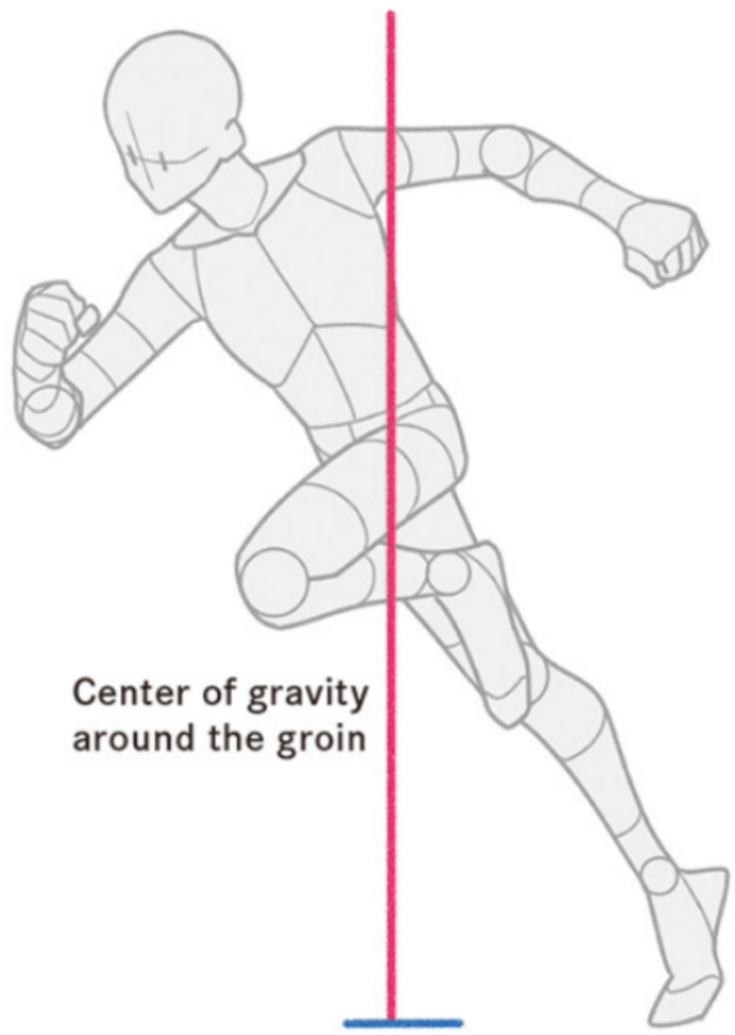
Here are poses from the book with lines on the center of gravity. The stationary pose has a stable center of gravity.



Center of gravity on the left-hand side



Center of gravity in the center



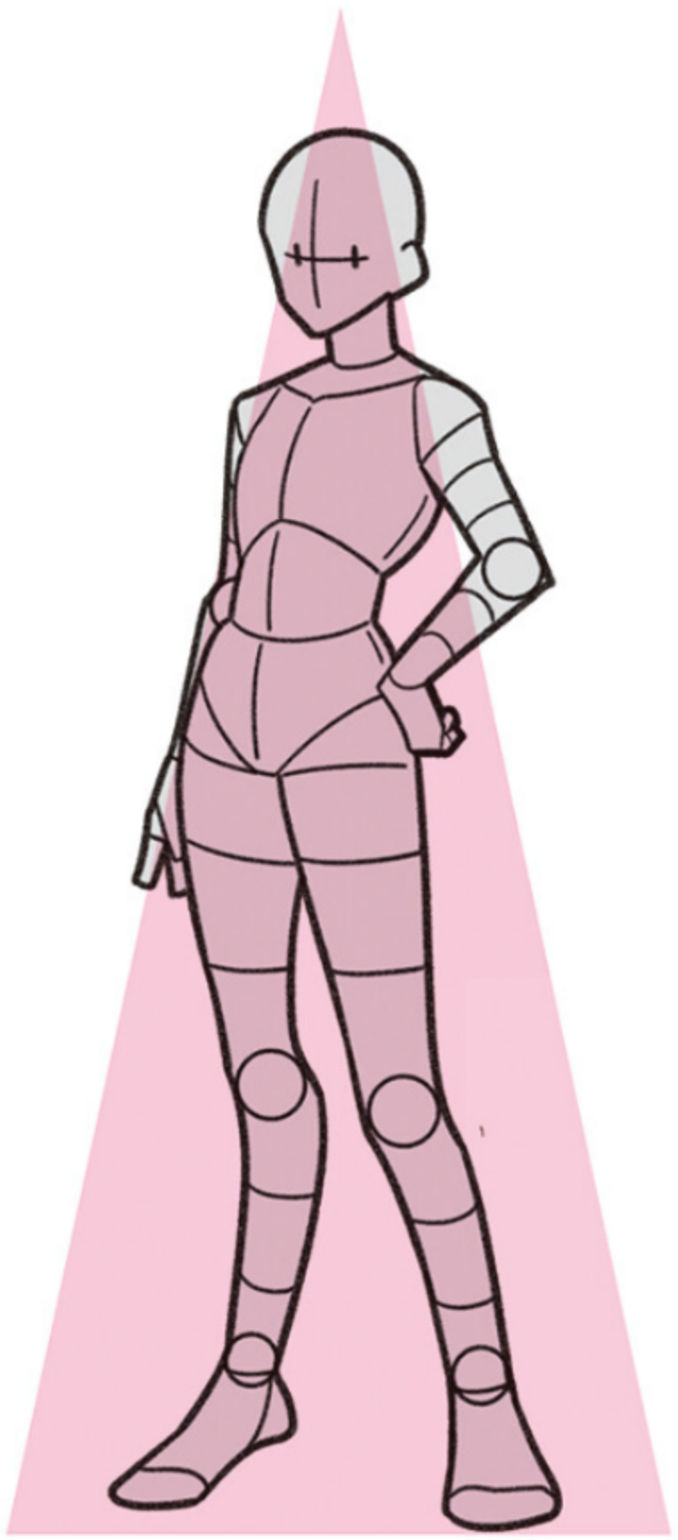
Center of gravity around the groin

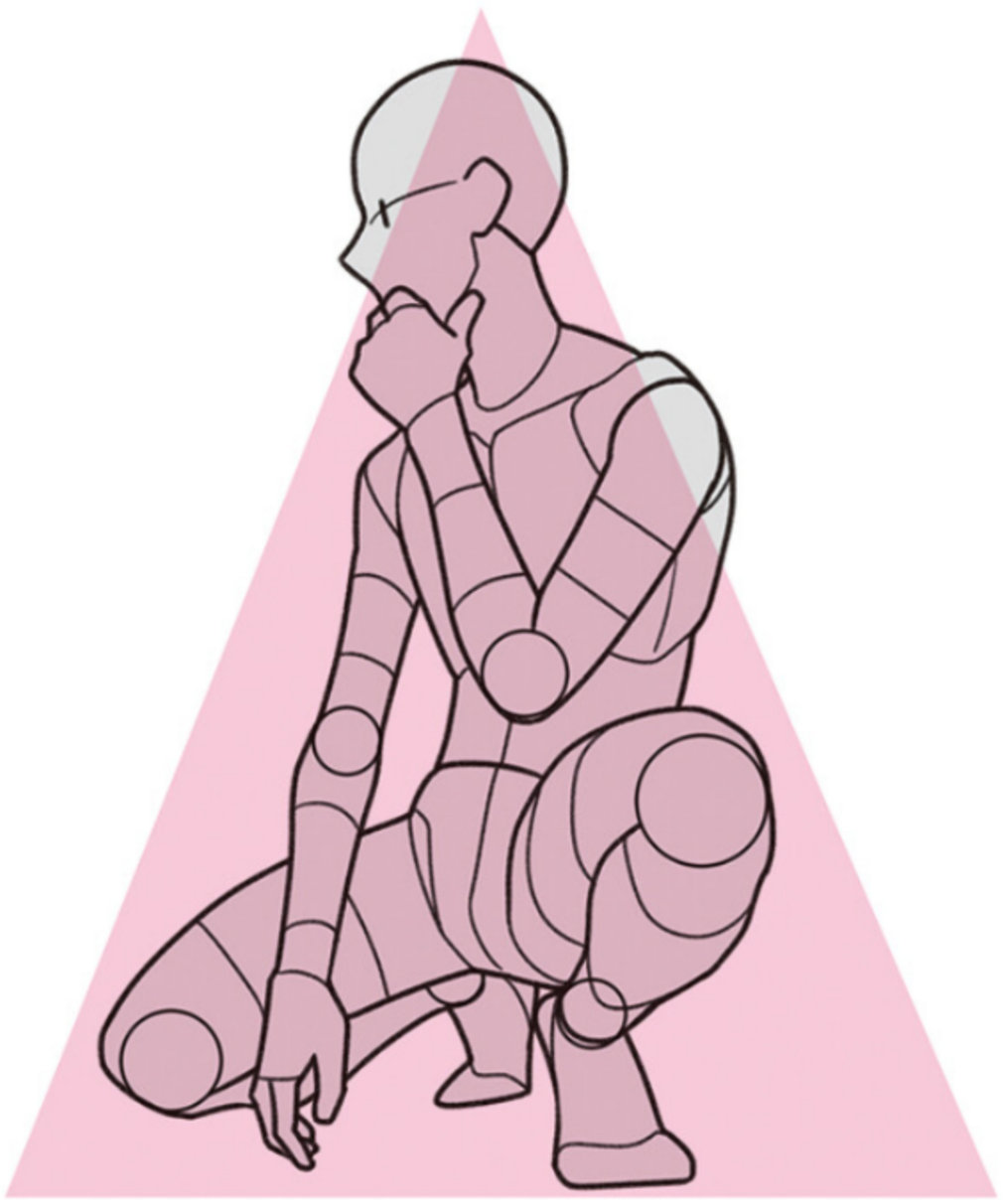
Big Shapes

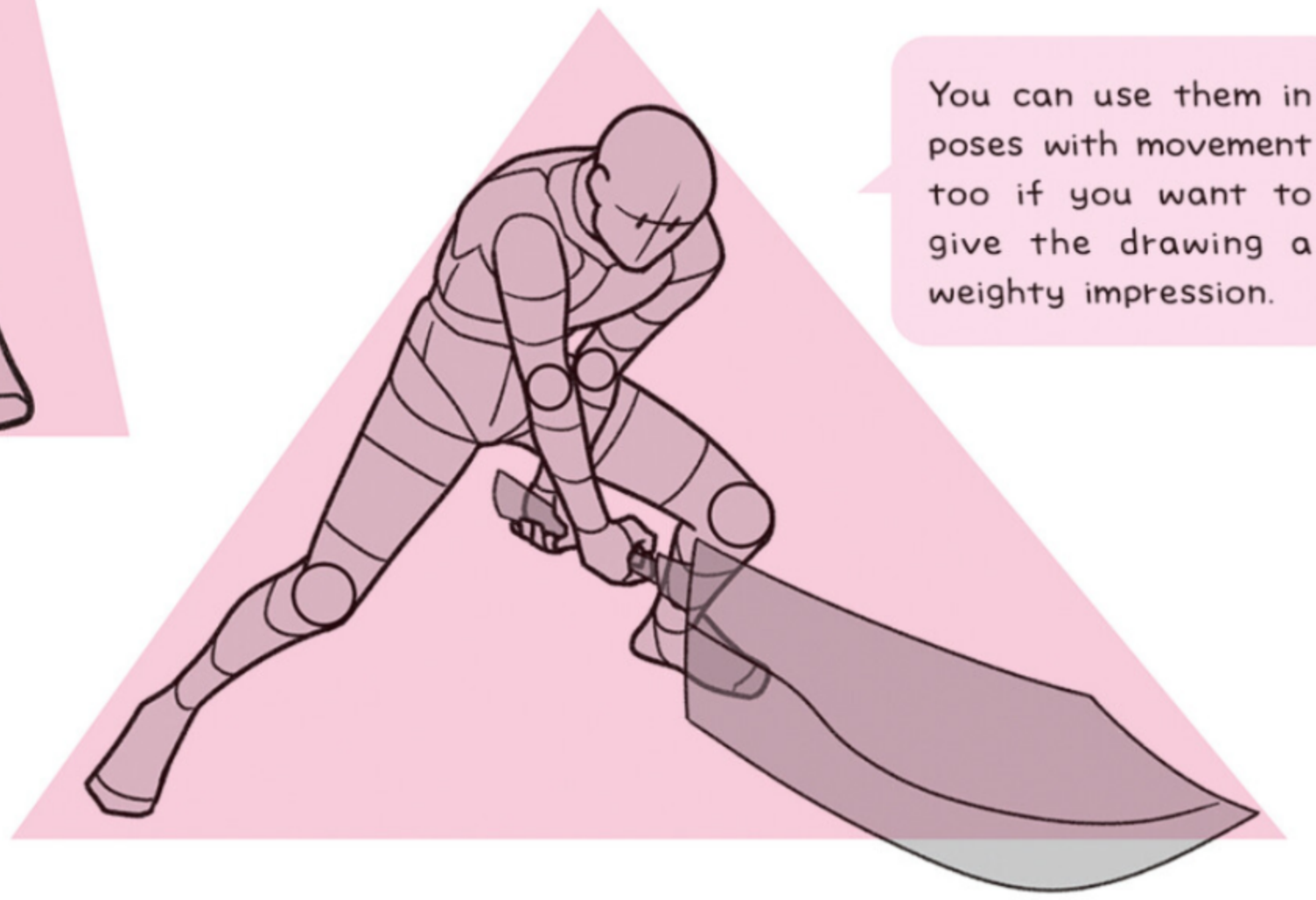
Pay attention to big shapes to make your silhouettes look good. Big shapes refer to shapes that capture the whole of your drawing. Keeping them in mind will help you draw attractive silhouettes by looking at the big pictures without being distracted by small details.

Triangle Shape

The triangle shape is ideal for creating a stable impression and works well with weighty and calm poses.



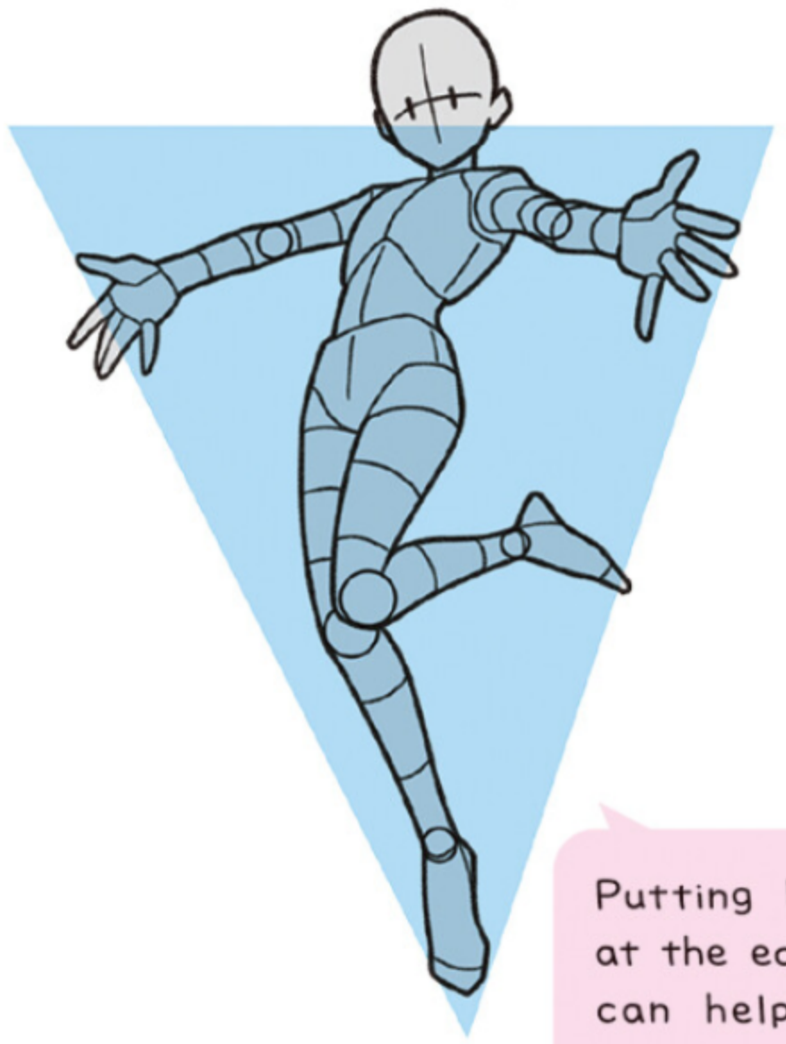


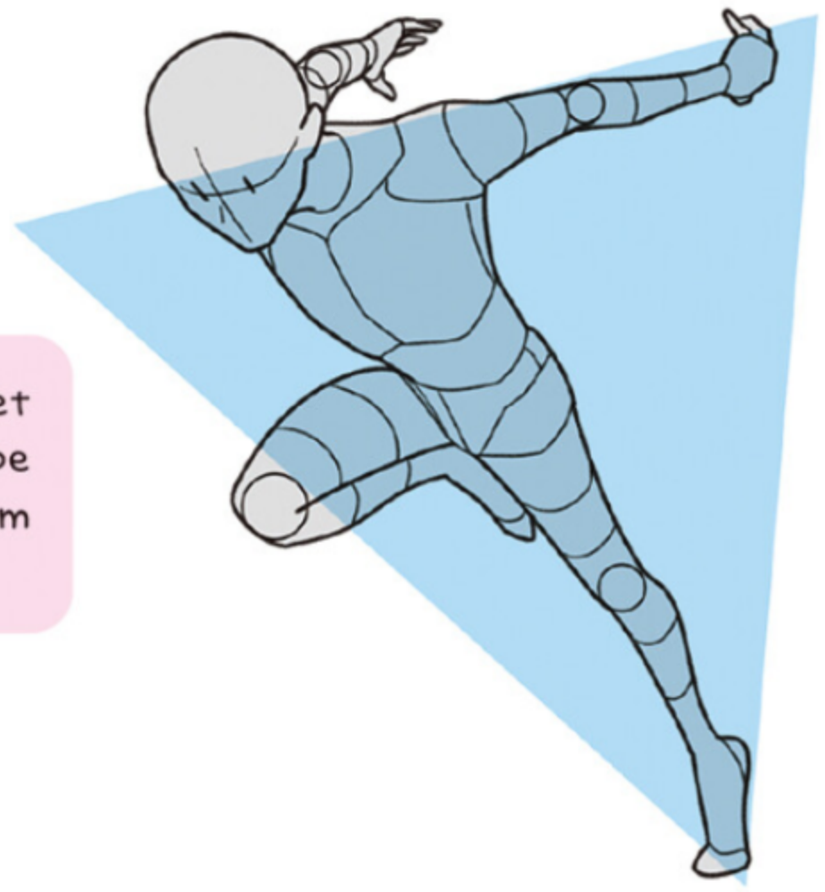


You can use them in poses with movement too if you want to give the drawing a weighty impression.

Reverse Triangle Shape

Reverse triangle shapes are great for making images with movement. They are a good match for action poses and for moving away from stable images. Use them wherever they fit.

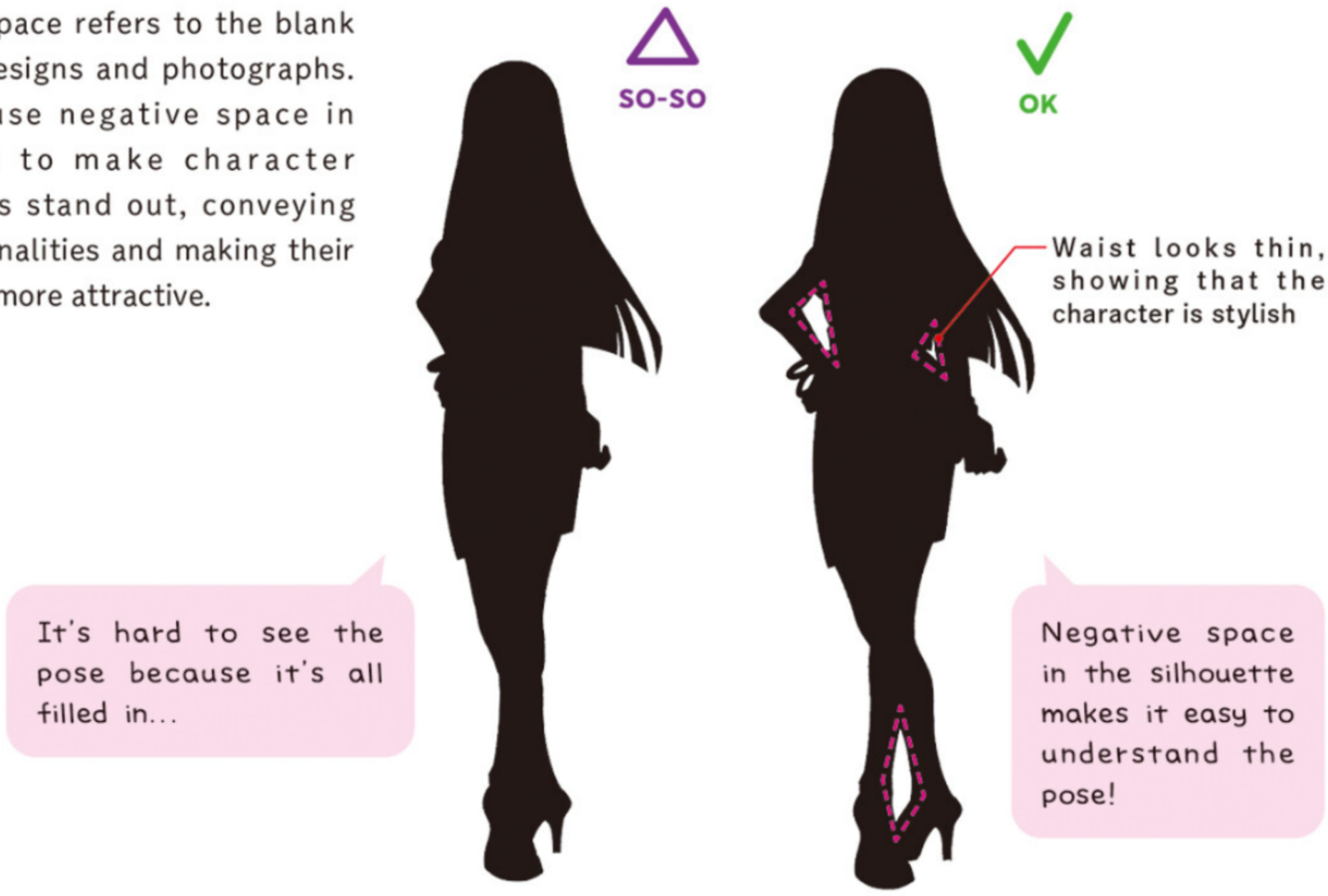




Putting hands and feet at the edge of the shape can help you fit them into the shape better.

Negative Space

Negative space refers to the blank space in designs and photographs. You can use negative space in drawings to make character silhouettes stand out, conveying their personalities and making their poses look more attractive.

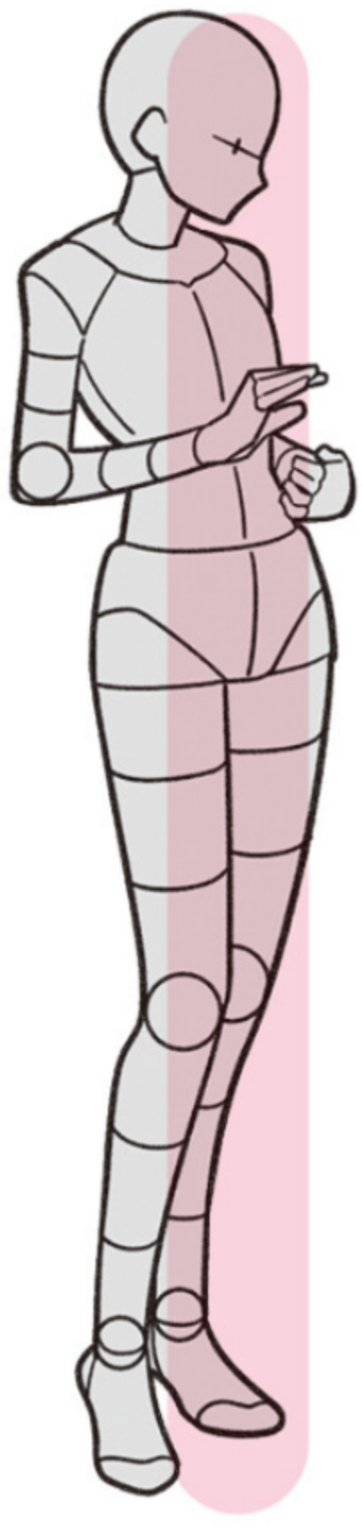


Silhouette Types

Poses can give different impressions depending on the silhouette of the body as a whole. Here we will explain five categories of poses. Learn each pose's effects and the impressions they give to use them to express what you want in your drawings.

Focus on the Silhouette Shape

If you draw without understand the impression a pose gives, you might end up with a drawing that doesn't express what you want. Here is an explanation of five common standing poses: I, S, A, V, and C.

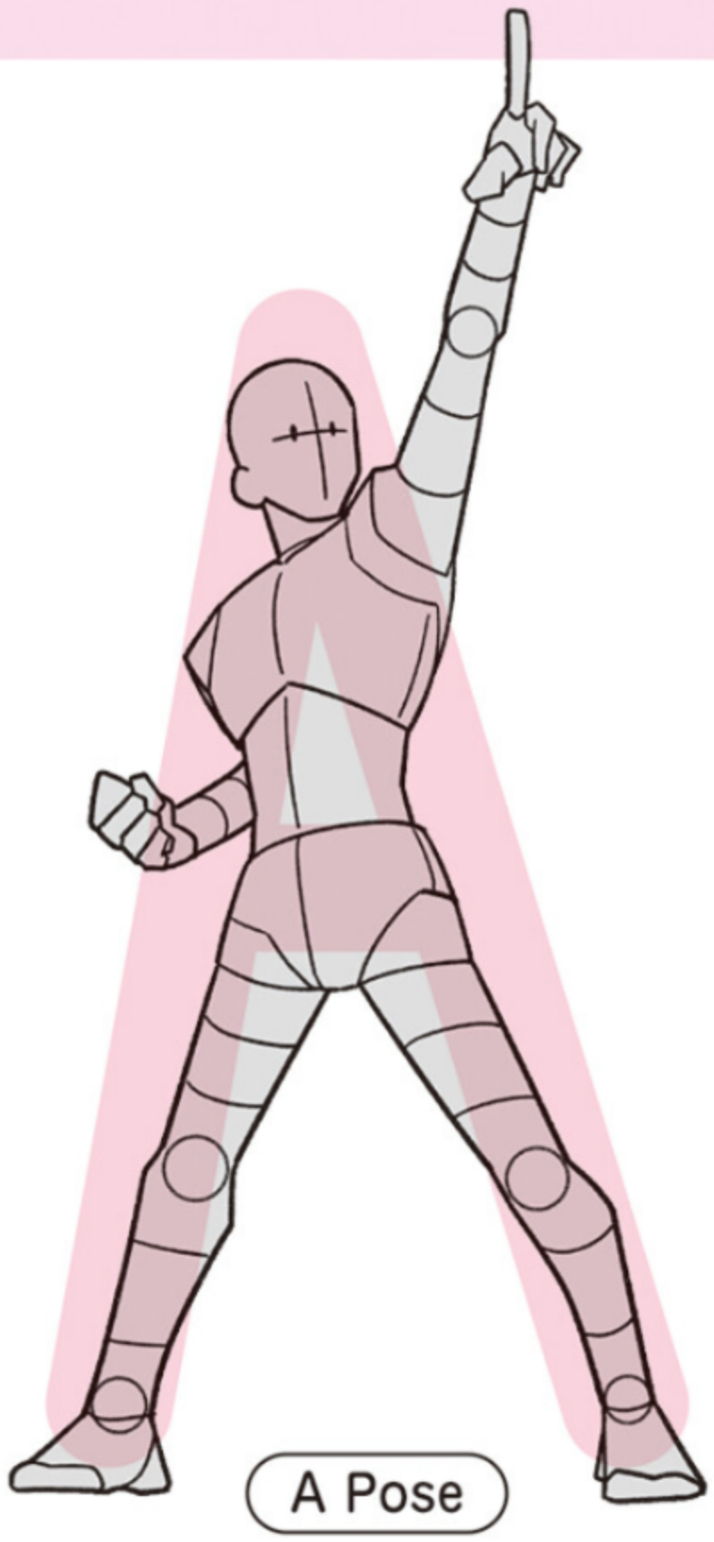


I Pose

The I pose gives a stylish and cool impression. Make it look cooler by tilting the waist and pulling the legs together instead of just drawing the character straight. Keeping the center of gravity in mind will help you draw a cool and unshakable character. Recommended for cool characters like butlers.

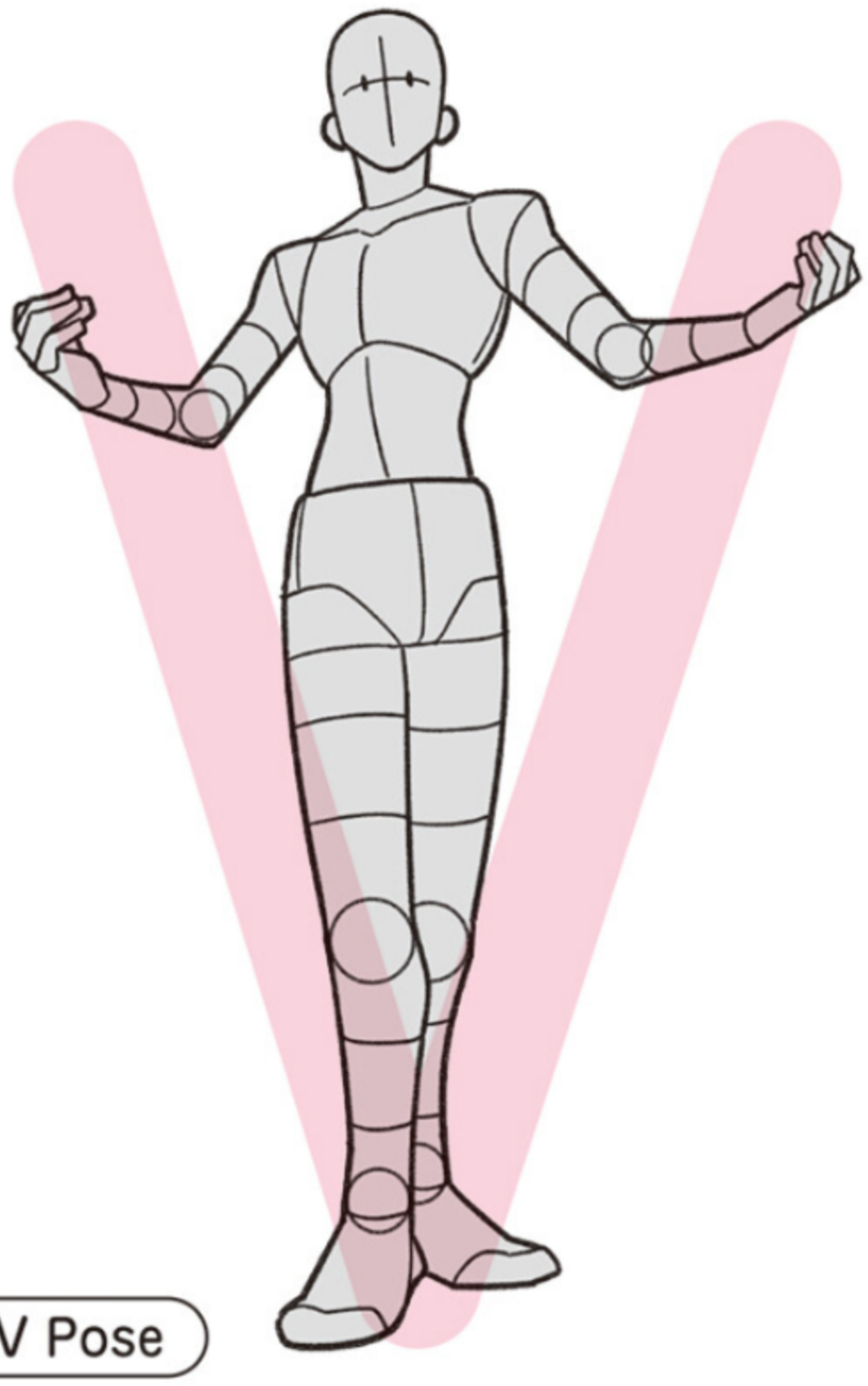
S Pose

The S pose focuses on contrapposto and creates large movement through the body. It is more dynamic than the C pose, making it look like art used in a game. It can be used to create a wide range of movement, like a sharp tilt of the hip or a deep bend forward. Recommended for exciting pose drawings.



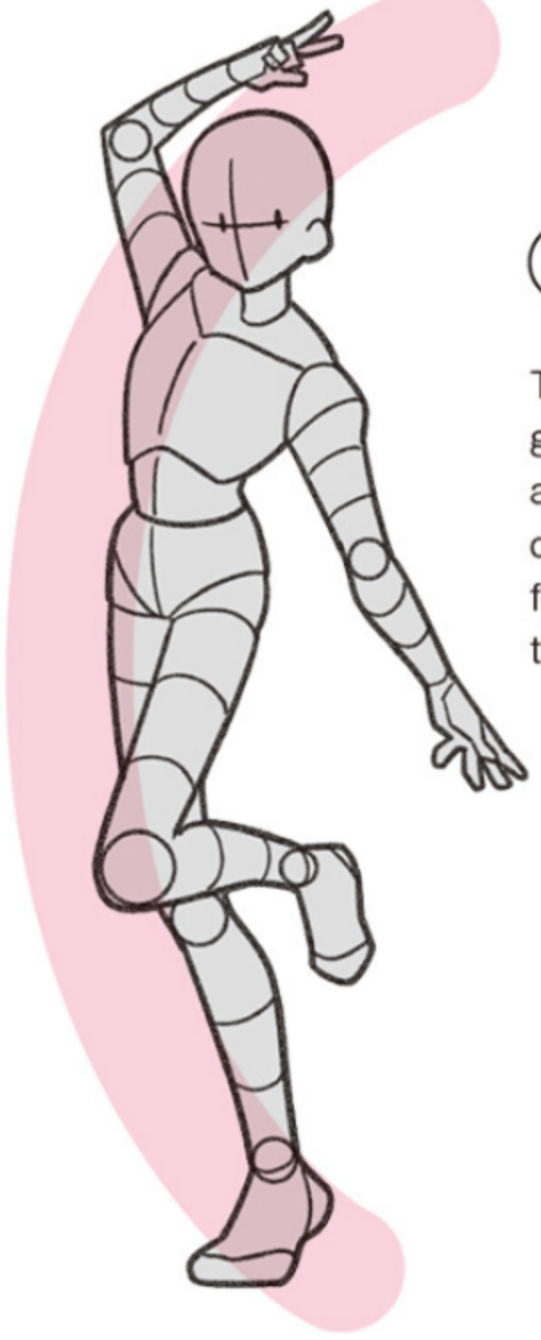
A Pose

The A pose gives a sense of strength and stability in its triangle A shape. An open pose (p.34) feels active and reliable, while a closed pose feels calm and stable. Triangle shapes are well balanced with a steady center of gravity, with a pleasing silhouette. When in doubt, go with A pose.



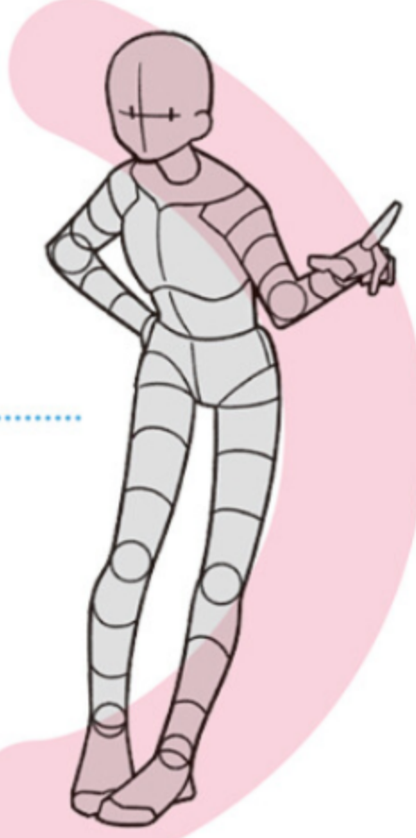
V Pose

The V pose with its reverse triangle shape gives a sense of movement and intimidation. The reverse triangle gives an unstable impression and is recommended for poses with movement. Keeping the reverse triangle and contrapposto in mind can help create a mysterious and solemn impression. Recommended for drawings where you want a different feel.



C Pose

The C pose adds natural movement by gently bending the body's silhouette. It can add movement to a standing or full-body drawing without a bold pose. Recommended for people who keep drawing standing poses that are straight and feel it is getting dull.



You can reverse the C!

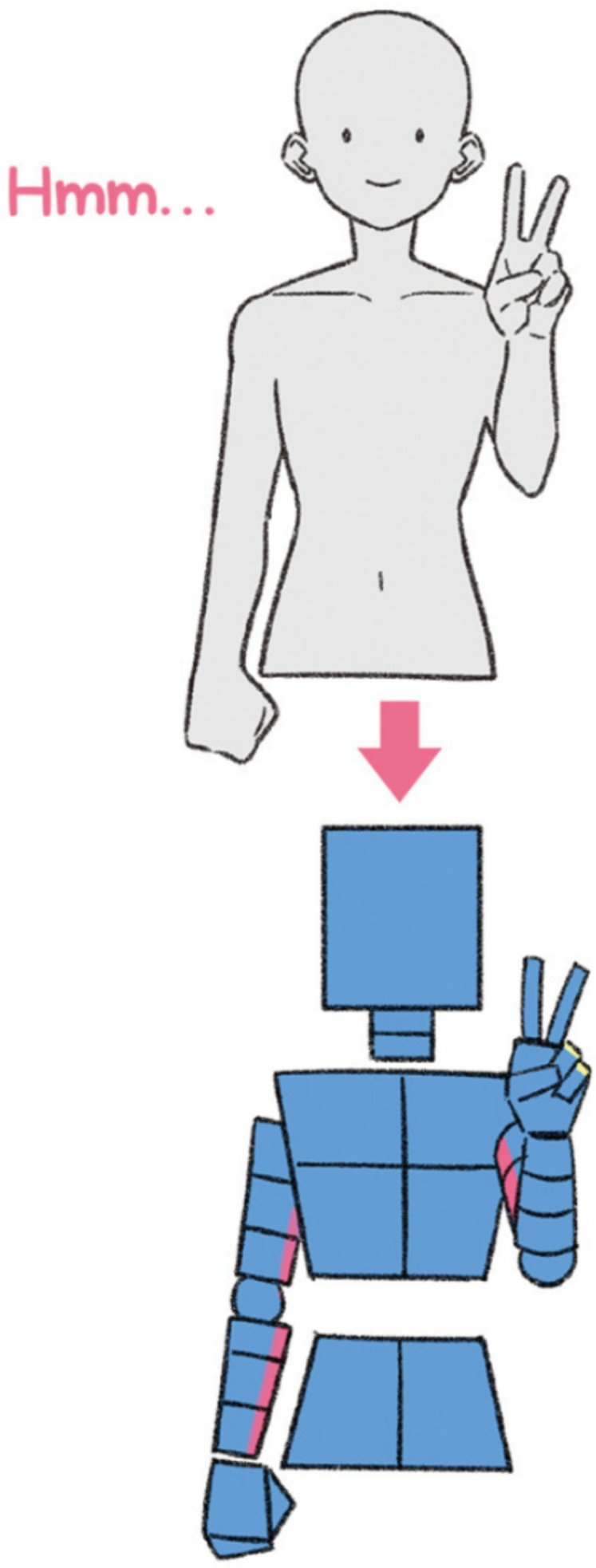
Bending the C inward can look cute and shy, while outward feels active and lively. Try different poses to match the situation.

Surfaces in 3D

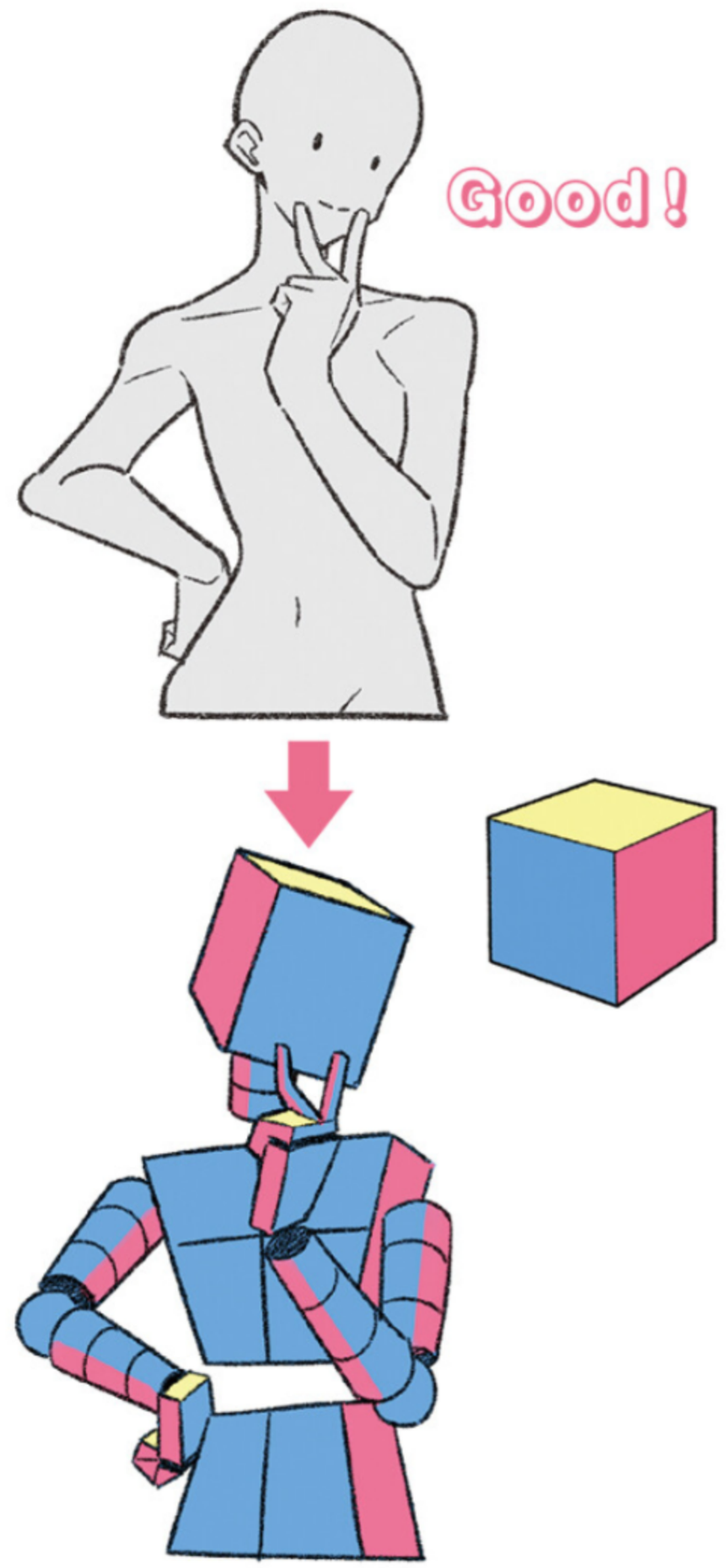
Paying attention to surfaces can give your drawing depth and make it feel more 3D, for a more attractive impression. Increase the number of surfaces so that your drawings don't look flat.

Focus on Surfaces for Better Drawings

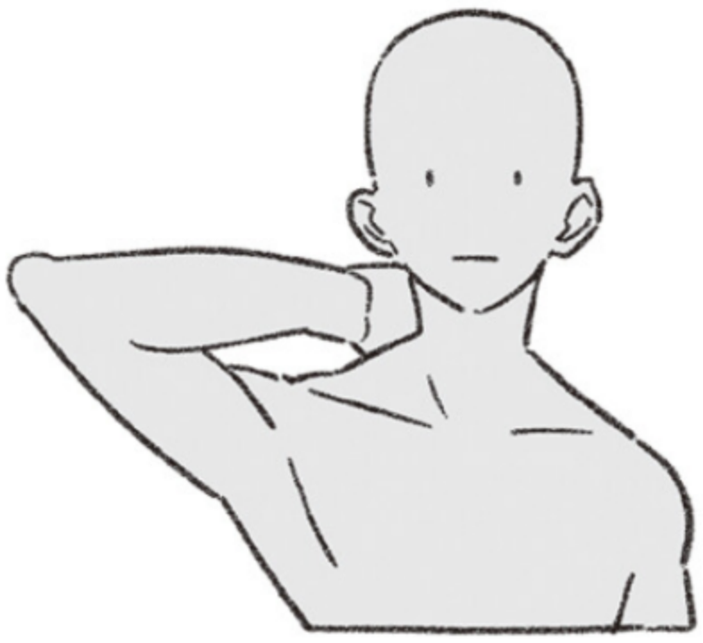
Look at the following two drawings. Which looks better? Most people would say the drawing on the right, but why? The drawings have been replaced with boxes to make it easier to understand. You can see that the right drawing has more information from surfaces at different angles!



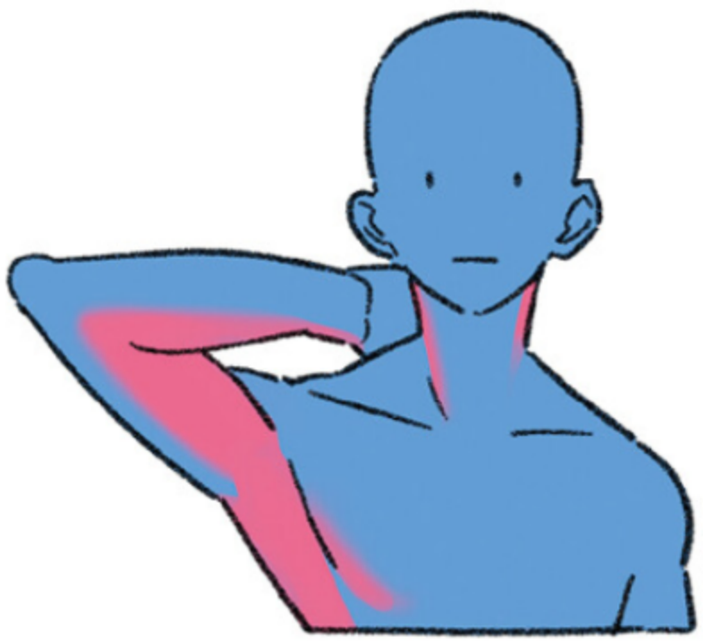
Drawing looks flat with parts only showing surfaces from the front

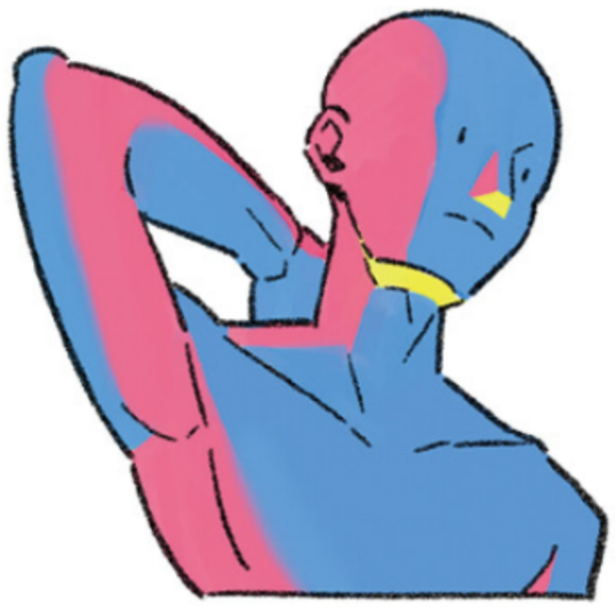


More visual information with surfaces at many angles for a better drawing!



Even just putting the face or body at an angle rather than the whole body can make a drawing more attractive

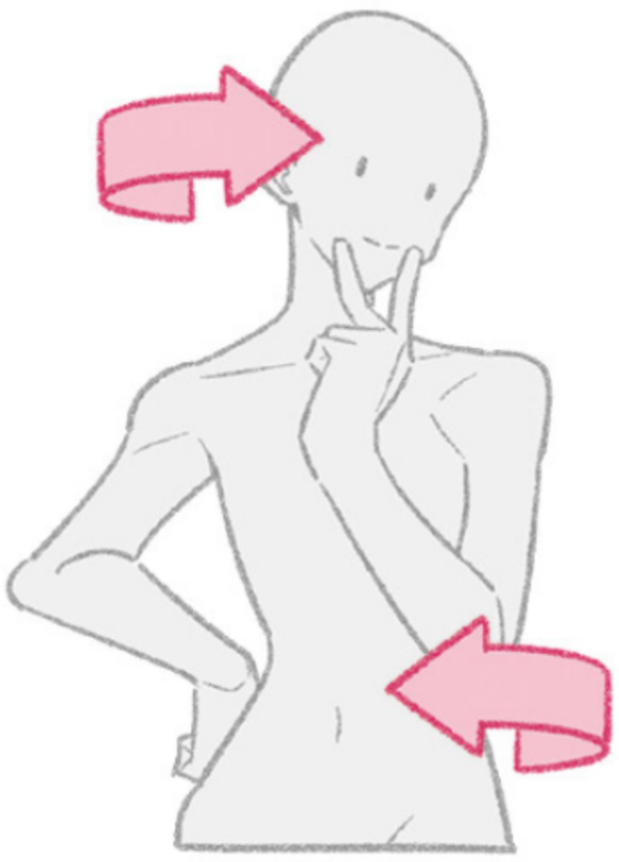




You can see different surfaces without drawing boxes by focusing on the dimensions of the body

Make things simpler...

Try turning the body in the opposite direction of the head! That's all it takes to increase the number of surfaces and make your drawing more attractive!



Focus on surfaces off the body too

By thinking of hair as a band, you can make it flutter and look more visually interesting, even from the front!

Character Introduction

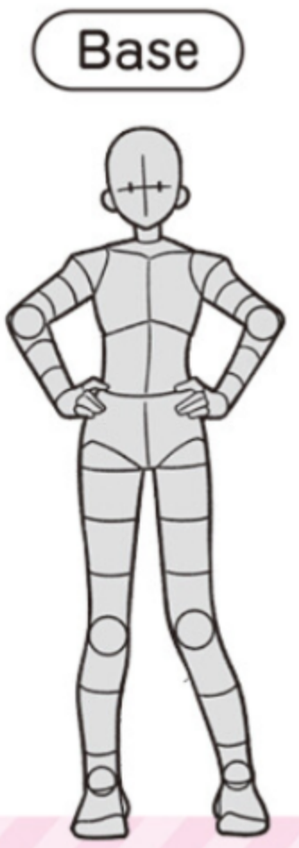
We have four types of characters in male and female for eight total: Active, Cute, Cool, and Sexy. Here is an introduction of their personalities and body types.

Character Height Comparison

This is a chart comparing the heights of the characters in this book. Note how their body sizes and head heights are different.

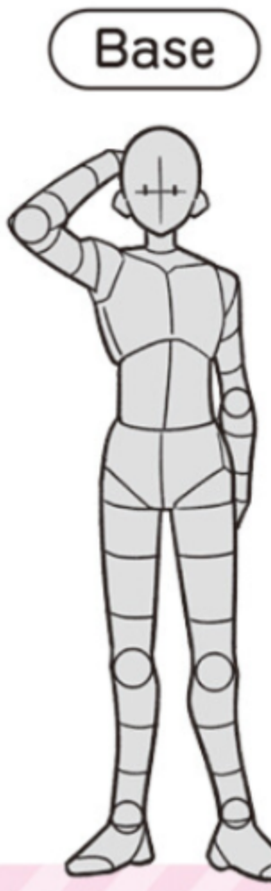
Active Type

Sturdy and muscular with big shoulders, arms, and legs, and a broad chest. He may be rough and clumsy, but he's a passionate man who cares about his friends. Excels at poses that show off his strength.



Slender with long limbs and an average height. She is free-spirited and innocent. She might seem foolish, but she can speak her mind clearly. Excels at easy-to-understand poses.

Cute Type



Narrow shoulders and thin arms and legs for a boyish figure. Maybe he knows how cute he is, or maybe he doesn't. Excels at boyish poses with a bit of deviousness.

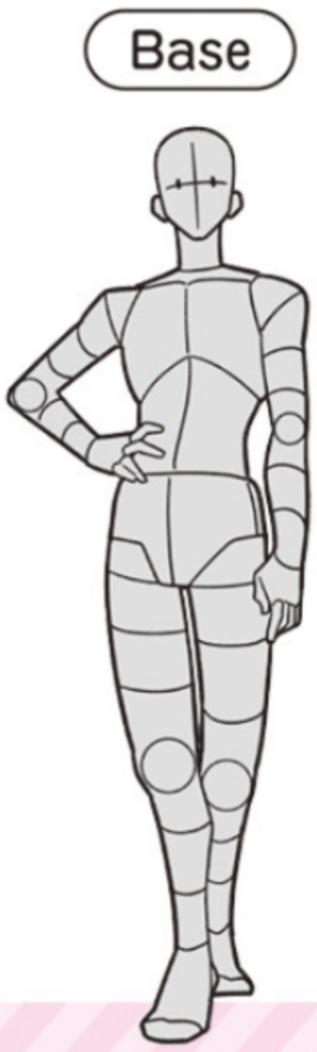
Wide hips for a feminine figure but small overall for a girlish figure. She loves current fashions and trends. Excels at cute poses that keep her small and girlish look.

Cool Type

Standard male character figure. He is serious and cold-blooded, always following the rules. Excels at standard masculine poses along with cool poses.

Standard female character figure. She is a perfectionist who will not tolerate any rule-breaking. Excels at dynamic feminine poses using S-shapes even with her straight lines.

Sexy Type



Slender arms and legs but broad shoulders. He has the proportions of a model and is enigmatic and arrogant. Excels in complex poses that use the S-shape while also showing off his masculinity.

Glamorous body with wide hips. She is a mature woman with good proportions and tall heels. Excels at poses with curves that show off her glamorous figure.

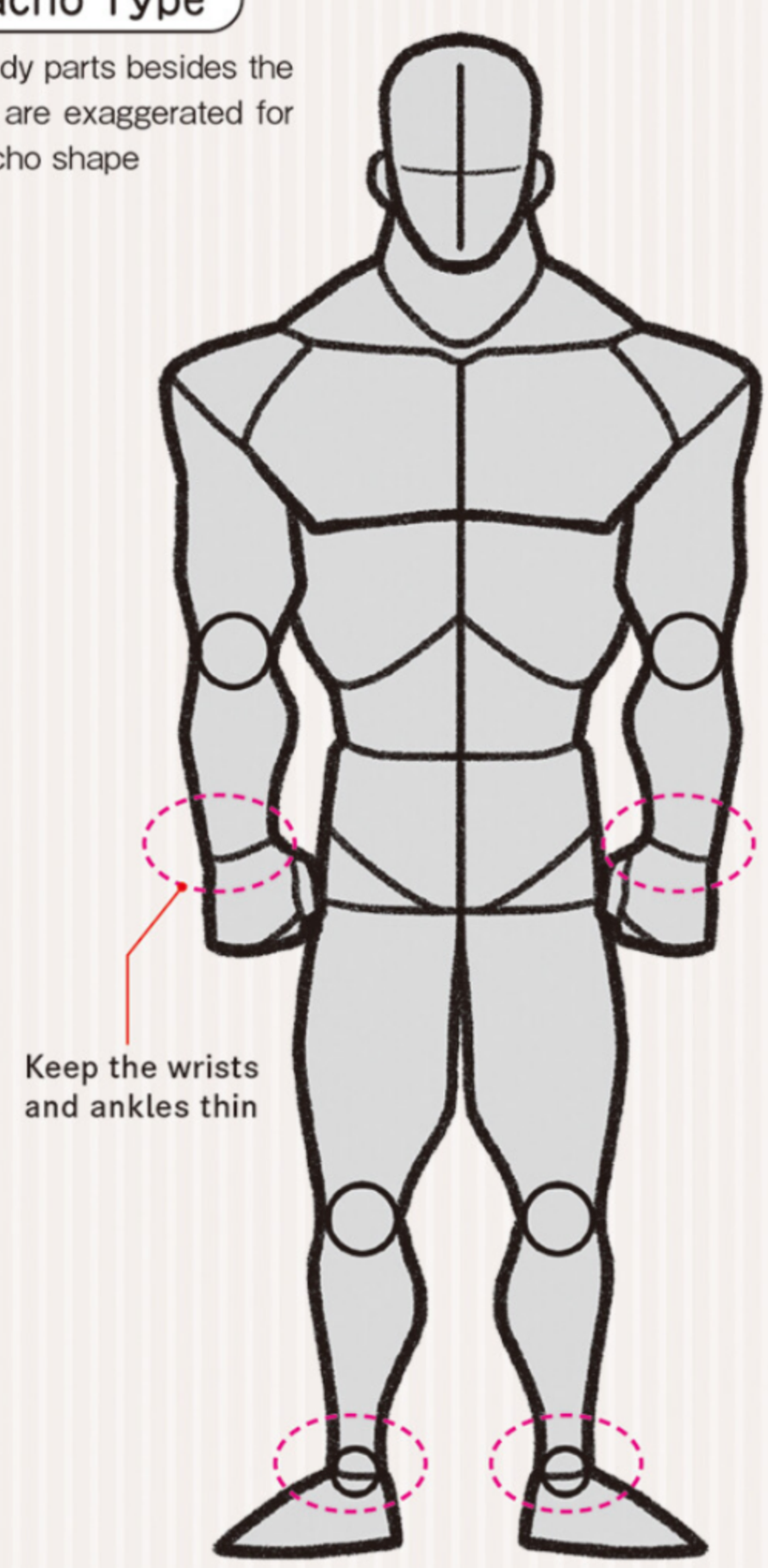
Column

Extreme Body Types

Let's also look at examples of extreme body types which can give a character more personality. Here are the macho type and the extremely thin type.

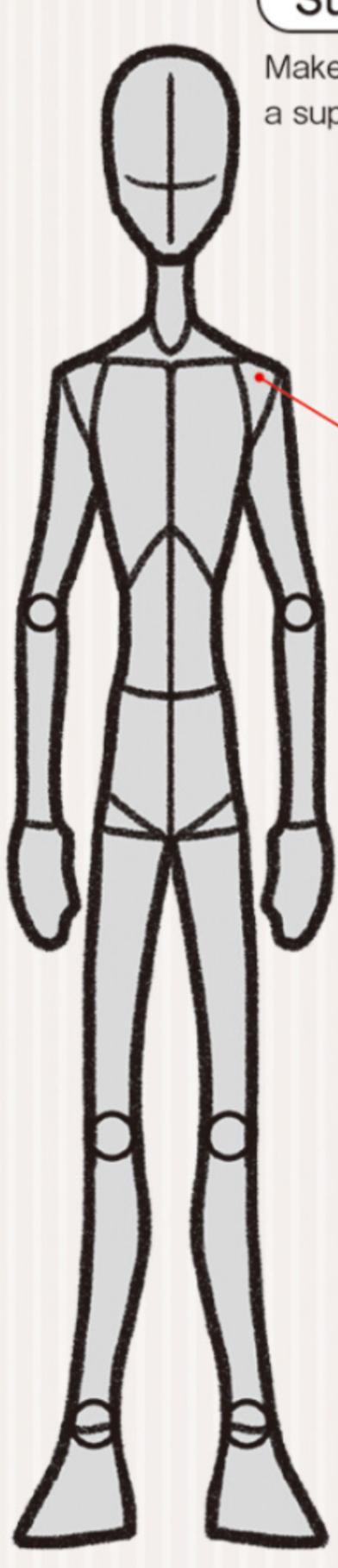
Macho Type

All body parts besides the waist are exaggerated for a macho shape

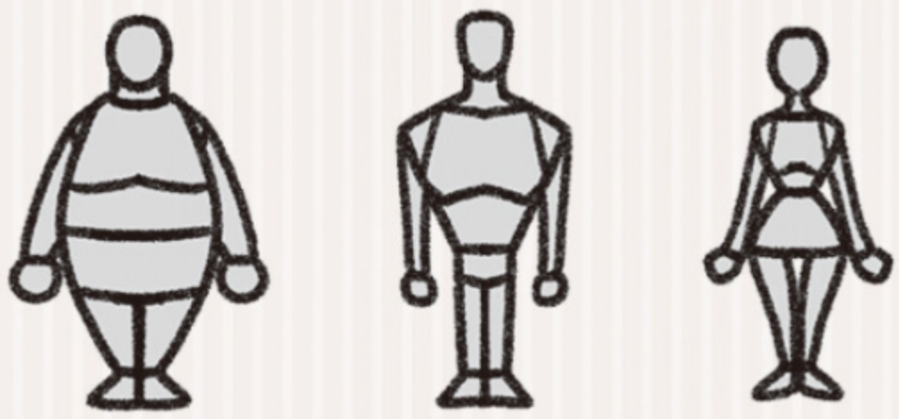


Super Thin Type

Make the whole body thin for a super skinny body



You can make many body types by featuring different parts of the body!



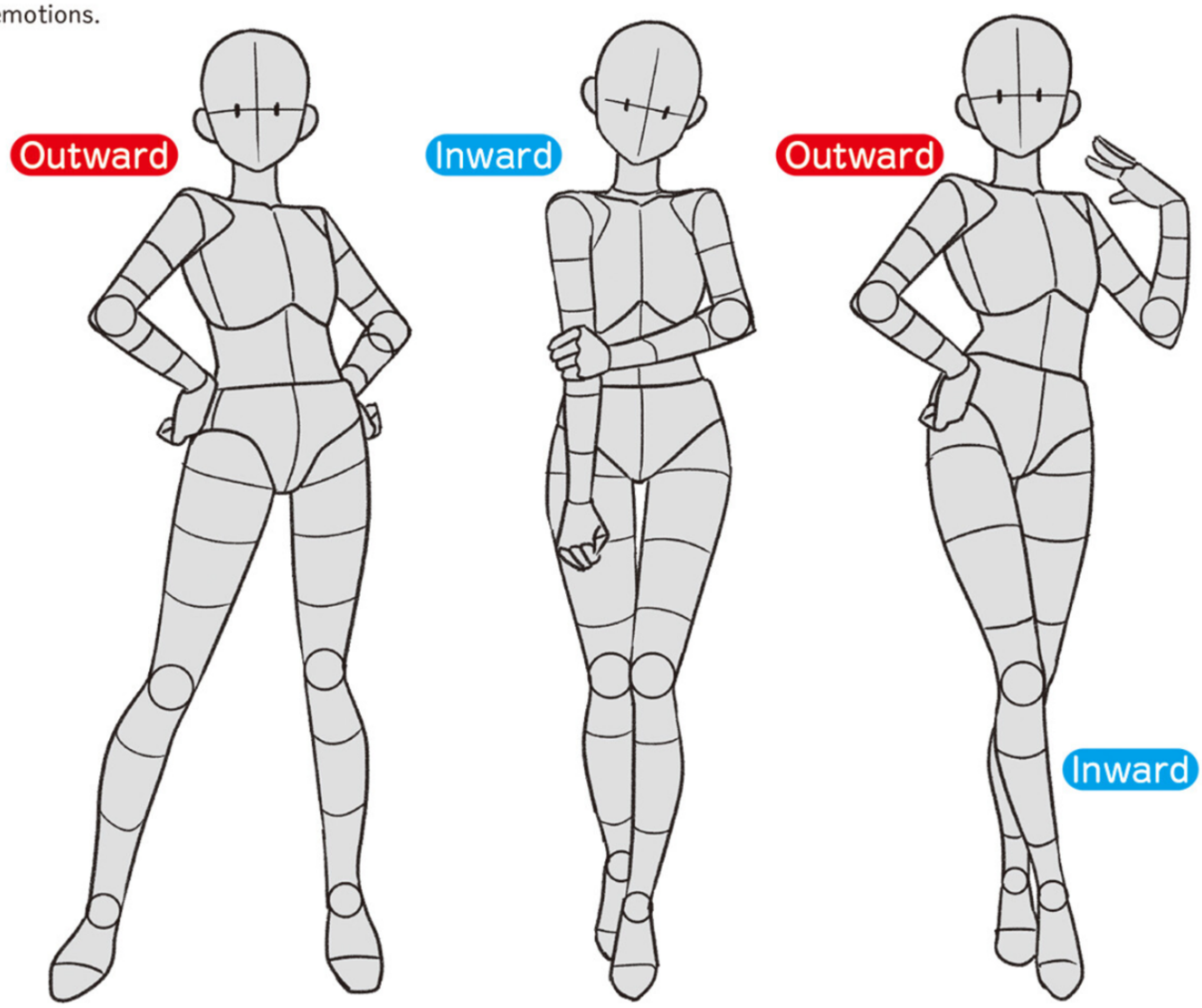
Expressing with Poses

You usually think of expressing emotions with the face, but you can use the body as well. An outward-facing body gives an active impression, while an inward-facing one gives a quiet impression. Using this can help you depict emotions more fully.

Open Pose and Closed Pose

Poses can express personality, but they can express emotions too. Outward-facing poses can show confidence, anger, and exposed emotions, while inward-facing poses can show lack of confidence, suppressed anger, and emotions like fear and tension. Mixing inward and outward poses in the upper and lower body can express more complex emotions.

You can also have a closed upper body with an open lower body, with arms crossed and feet spread out.



Open Pose

Making body parts face outward makes a pose filled with confidence

Closed Pose

Making body parts face inward makes a pose that lacks energy and confidence

Combined Pose

The upper body faces outward while the lower faces inward, giving an air of confidence that is also calm

Emotion Level and Poses

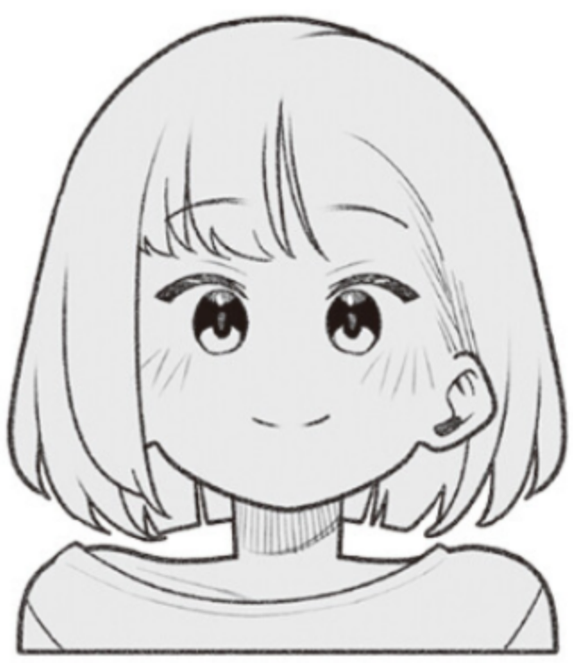
When people are happy, they might raise their hands up in fists. When they're sad, they might curl up to hold back tears. Changing how strong a pose depending on how strong the emotion is can help show the emotion through the whole body.

Turn the pose inward to make it look like tears are spilling out even as the character tries to hold them back.

A pose will face outward more the stronger the emotion expressed is.

Express More with Expressions

Focusing on how strong an emotion is in facial expressions too can help you convey emotions effectively with your poses and expressions. Look at the expressions here along with the explanation on the next page.



Happy Expression Low

Angry Expression Low

Sad Expression Low

Expression of Joy

Using open poses with hands and arms spread outward can expression joy overflowing from within. To express a stronger feeling of joy, use full-body poses to convey the emotion more dynamically. You can combine facial expressions and poses to express joy more naturally.

Movements are kept small with the emotion expressed through the face and hand gestures to keep a cute impression

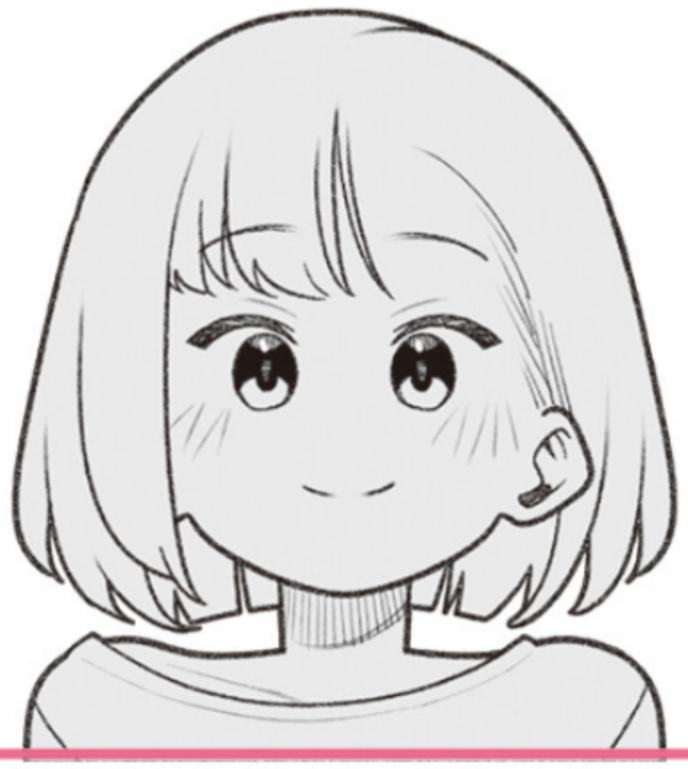
Add some open features such as an open mouth and hands in fists, showing some emotion spilling out

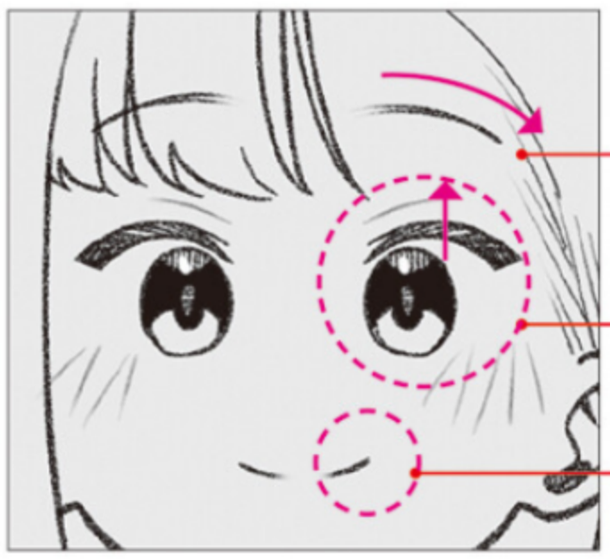
Joy is expressed through raised hands and a jump, showing stronger emotions through a more open pose

Differences in Expression and Emotion Level

All parts of the face have a part to play in expressing joy, but the shape of the mouth and eyes are particularly important in showing the level of joy. Some people's body temperatures rise when they are happy, so a flushed face can help too. The shape of eyelids, the position of eyebrows, the angle of the corners of the mouth, and so on can change how the emotion level drastically. Make sure to draw them with care.

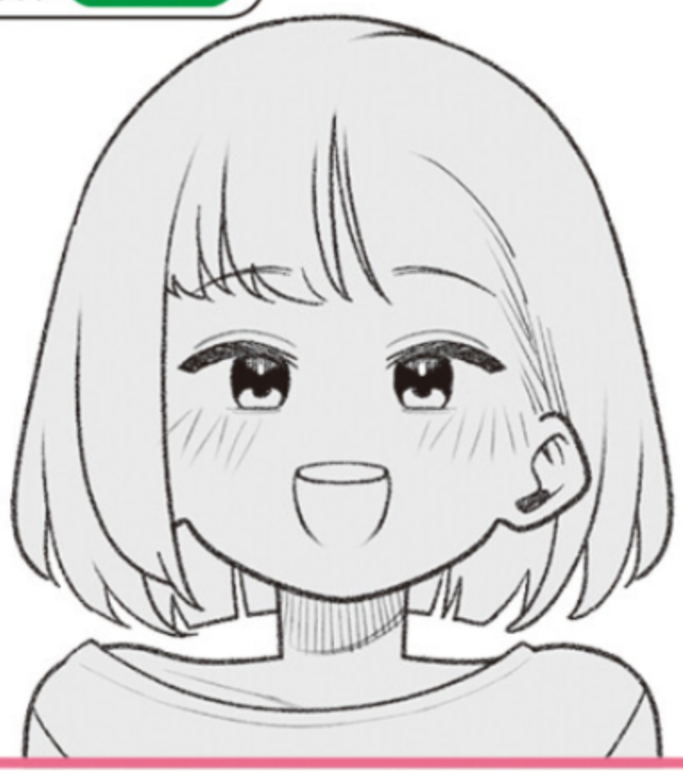
Emotion Low

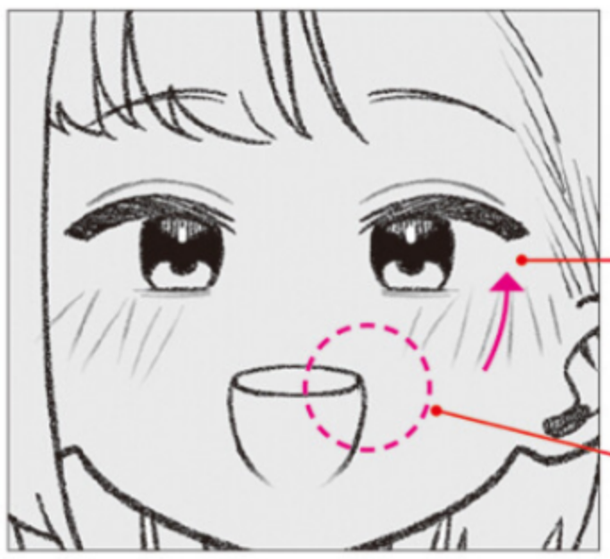




People's pupils grow larger when happy, so draw the black of the eye a bit bigger than normal.

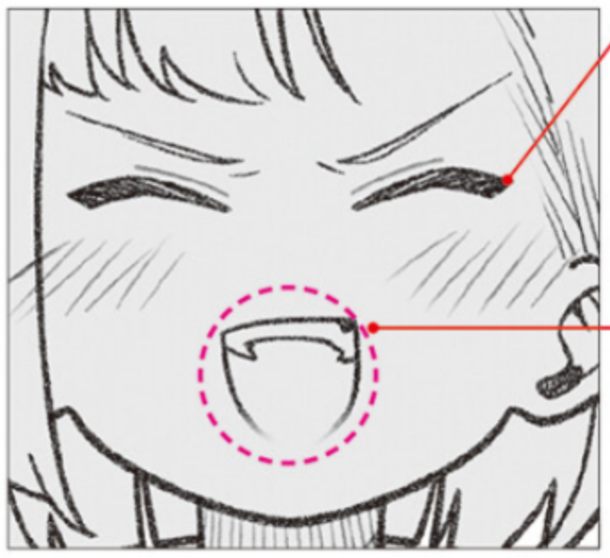
Emotion Middle





Opening the mouth enough to show teeth shows a stronger expression of joy.

Emotion High

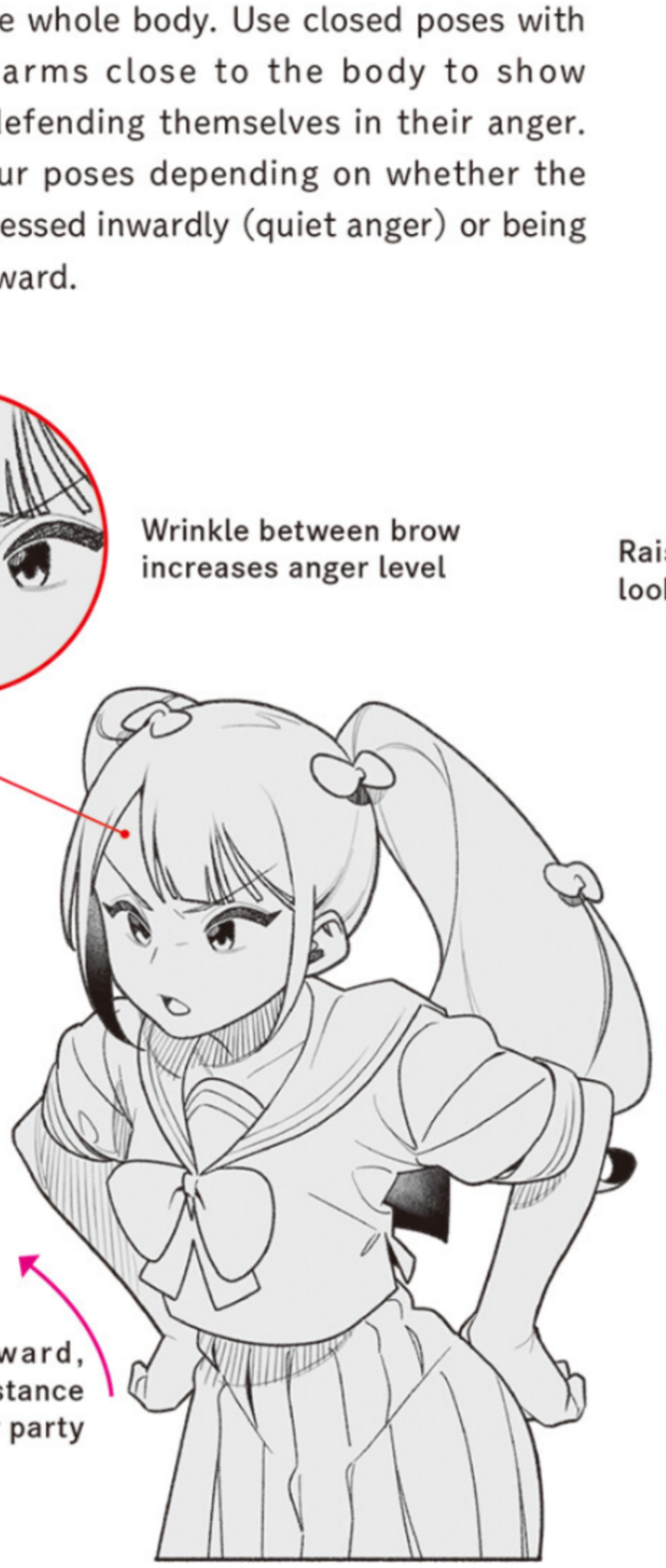


Wide-open eyes can also express strong joy, so choose what to use depending on the situation and the character's personality.

Expression of Anger

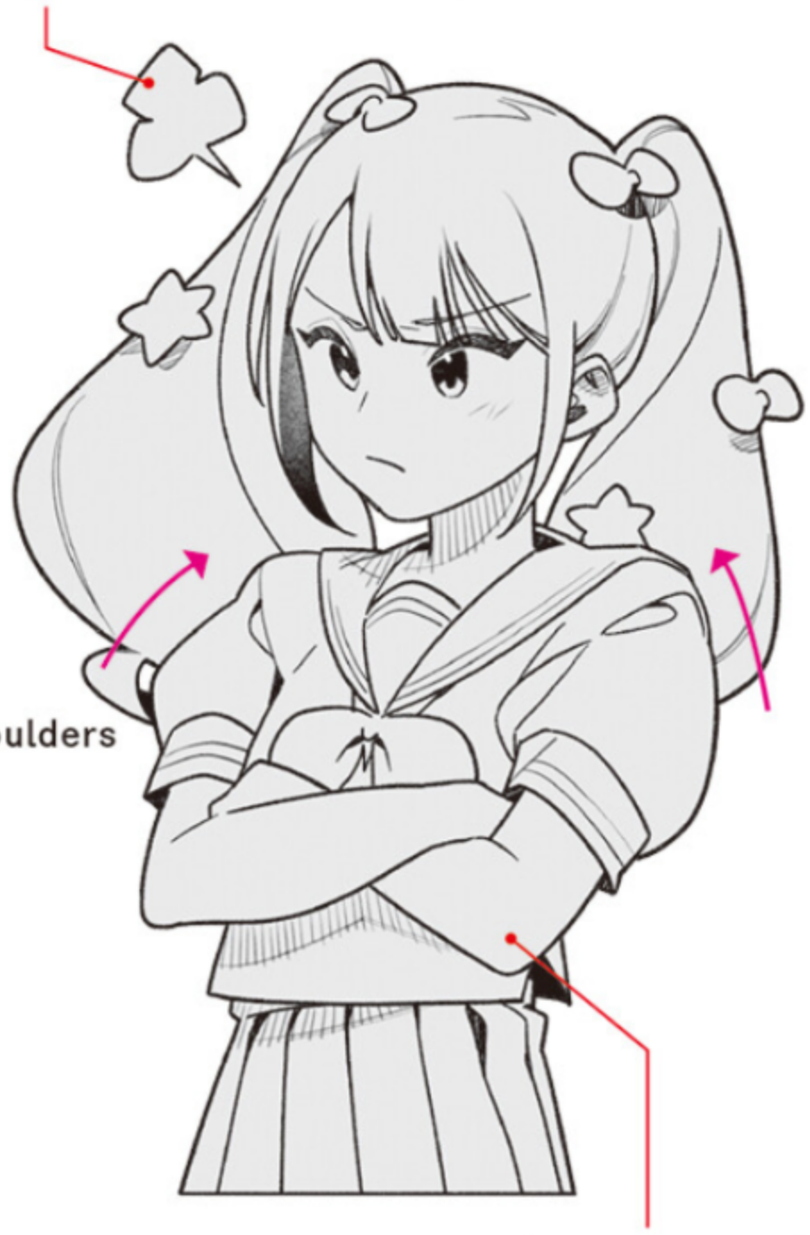
Anger can be expressed by tense muscles stiffening the whole body. Use closed poses with hands and arms close to the body to show characters defending themselves in their anger. Consider your poses depending on whether the anger is expressed inwardly (quiet anger) or being released outward.

Wrinkle between brow increases anger level



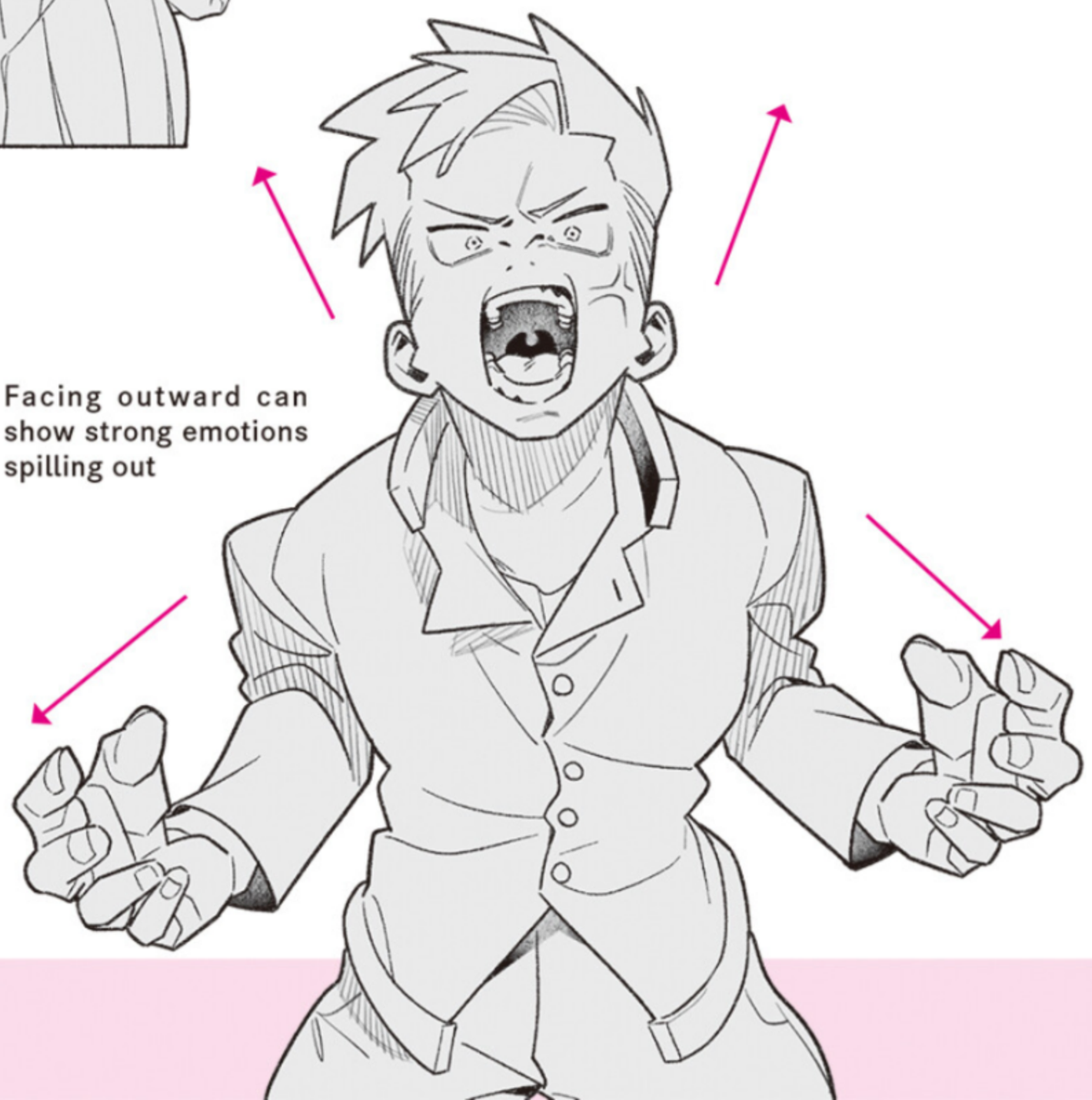
Leaning forward, closing the distance with the other party

Cartoonish expressions like these can be good to show a bit of anger



Raised shoulders look angry

Crossed arms show a closed heart



Facing outward can show strong emotions spilling out

Emotion Level and Poses

Anger can be shown through how the eyebrows are raised and the wrinkle between the brows. The presence or absence of a wrinkle can greatly change how the anger appears, so keep it in mind when drawing. Pupils can be drawn smaller than normal to show stronger anger.

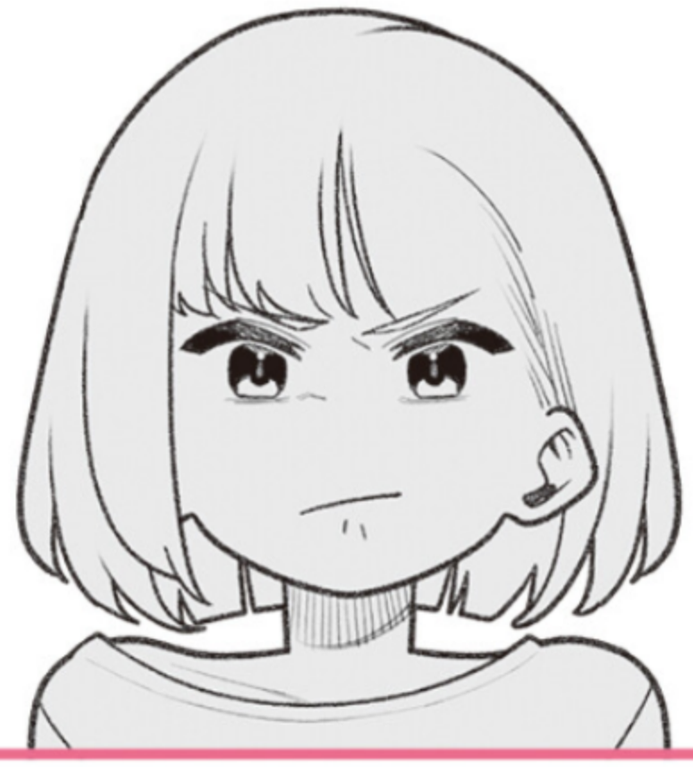
Emotion Low

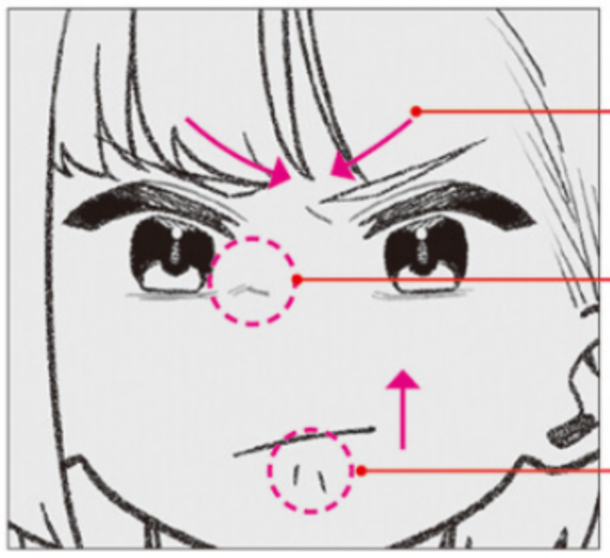
Bring the edge of the eyebrows closer together and wrinkle the brow, with a smaller wrinkle for less anger

Puffing out the cheeks comically can be good too!

A slight flush in the cheeks can show mild anger.

Emotion Middle





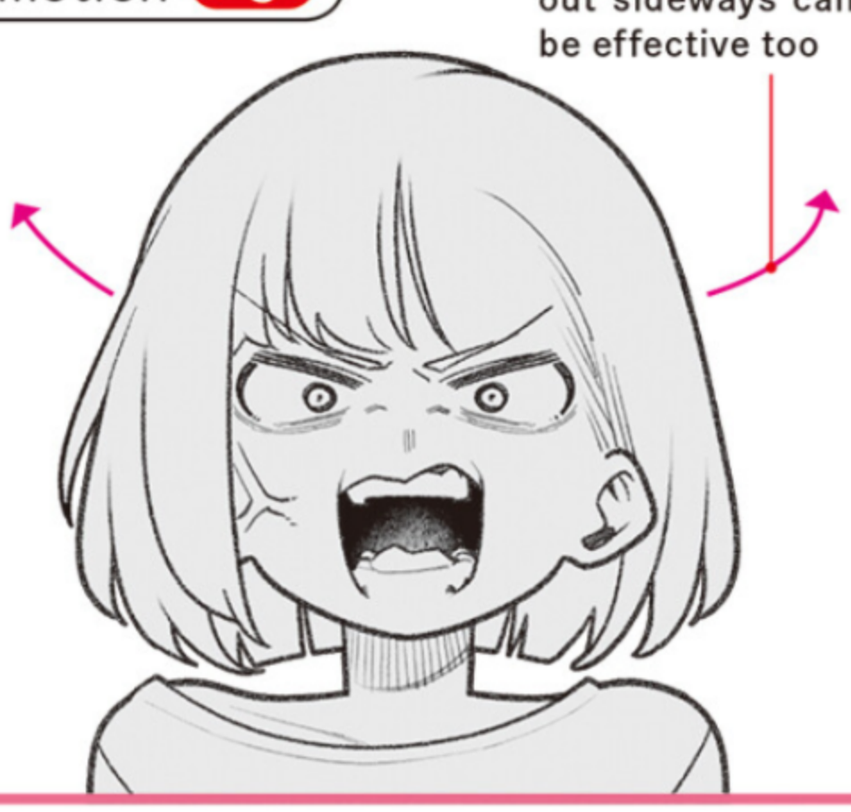
Eyebrow edges are angled more with more closed eyelids and narrower eyes

Wrinkles between the eyes can show more anger

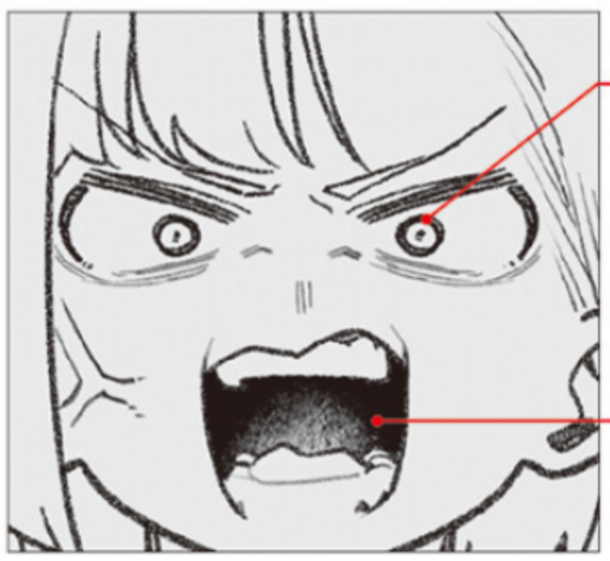
A crease under the mouth shows the character biting the lips in anger

Raising the edge of the mouth along with the right eye's lower eyelid can show anger more naturally.

Emotion High



Spreading hair out sideways can be effective too



Pupils are small with rage

Wide open mouth looks like the character is shouting with anger

Adding a pulsing vein can show strong anger, but this may not work depending on the character or art style. Use it in situations where it goes well with your drawing.

Expression of Sadness

A closed pose with a small body and inward-facing posture can express sadness. The head, gaze, and shoulders facing down can also help. In addition to symbols like tears, you can also use poses and gestures to show sadness. Sadness can come hand in hand with anger, so keep in mind which is stronger in your character and try to blend expressions of both in your drawing.

Hair can help express emotions too

Wiping tears away messily can show frustration

Emotions with eyebrows

The same crying face can show different emotions depending on how the eyebrows are drawn. On the left, the eyebrows tilt down, emphasizing sadness, while on the right, the eyebrows are raised, combining sadness with frustration.

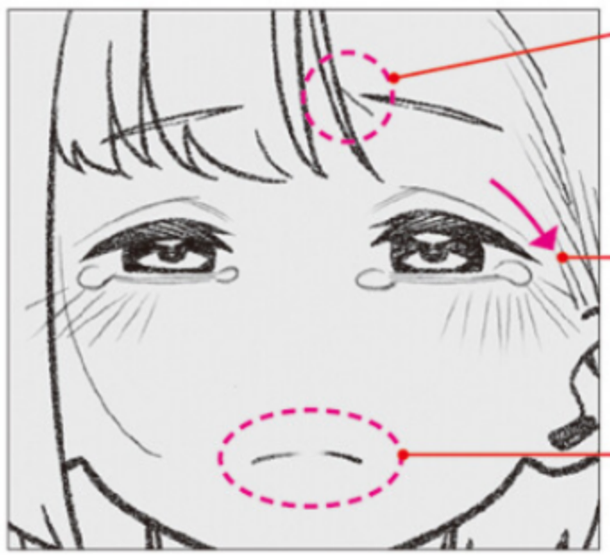
Shadowed eyes express hopelessness

Clenched fists show sorrow mixed with anger

Emotion Level and Poses

Sadness can change greatly with minor differences in the eyes, mouth, and eyebrows. The muscles around the eyes relax to make eyes look heavier as they droop slightly. Eyebrows come closer together, lips grow thin when pressed together, and the corners of the mouth tilt down. Use this as a foundation to help you express the sadness you wish to portray.

Emotion Low



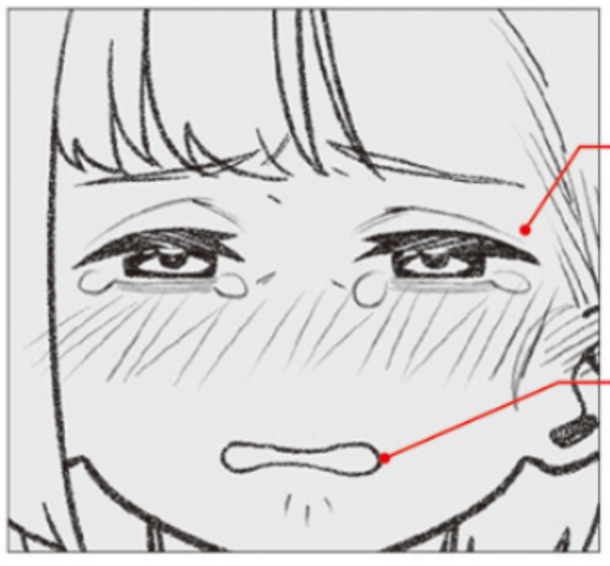
Downturned brows, slightly closer together with a thin wrinkle between them

Eye corners droop

Lips pressed lightly together to show tears and emotions being held back

Showing a few tears lingering in the corners of the eyes can be effective.

Emotion Middle

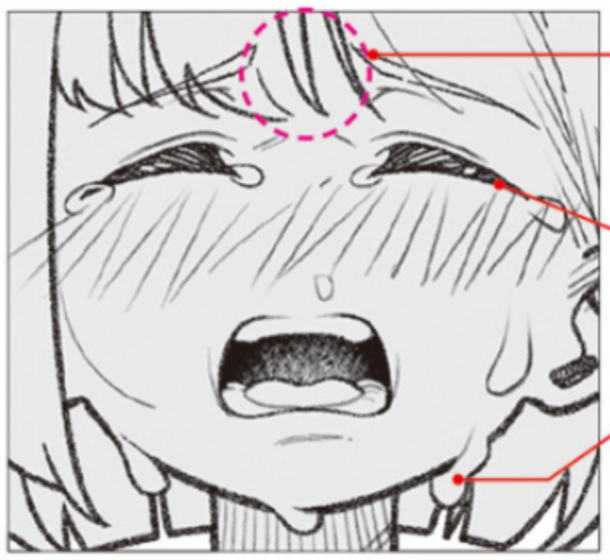


Eyes squeezed together to try to stop tears from spilling out

A slightly open and quivering mouth can be effective

You can show sadness just about to brim over with tearful eyes and a quivering mouth. It looks like the dam of emotions is just about to break.

Emotion High



Eyebrows close together with deep creases between them

Eyebrows and edge of eyes turn strongly downward

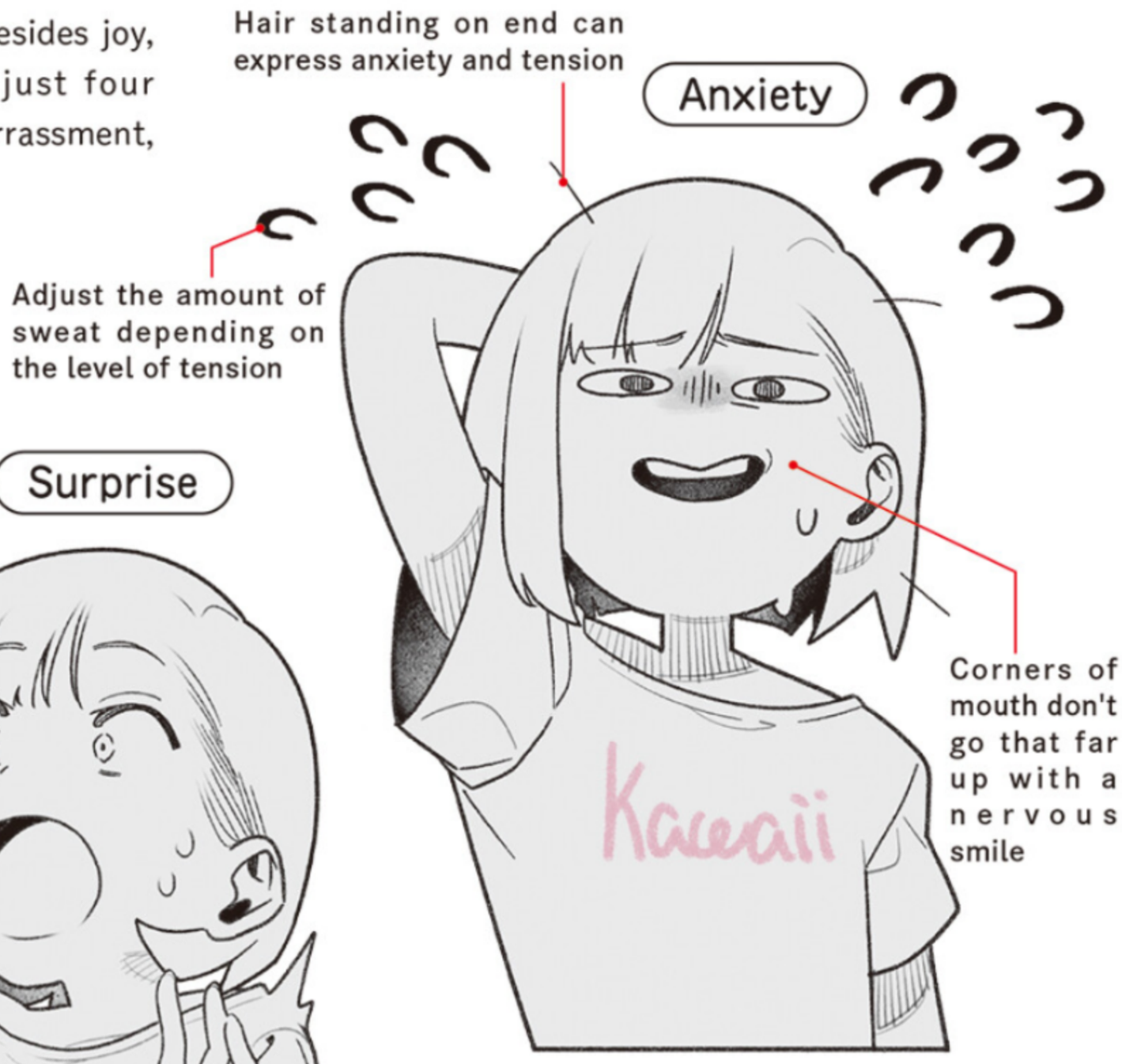
Tears spilling out down to the chin like a broken dam can be effective

A listless face, downward gaze, and quivering lip can express a strong sense of sadness and loss.

Other Emotions

There are many other emotions besides joy, anger, and sadness. Here are just four examples: surprise, anxiety, embarrassment, and concealed power.

Anxiety



Surprise

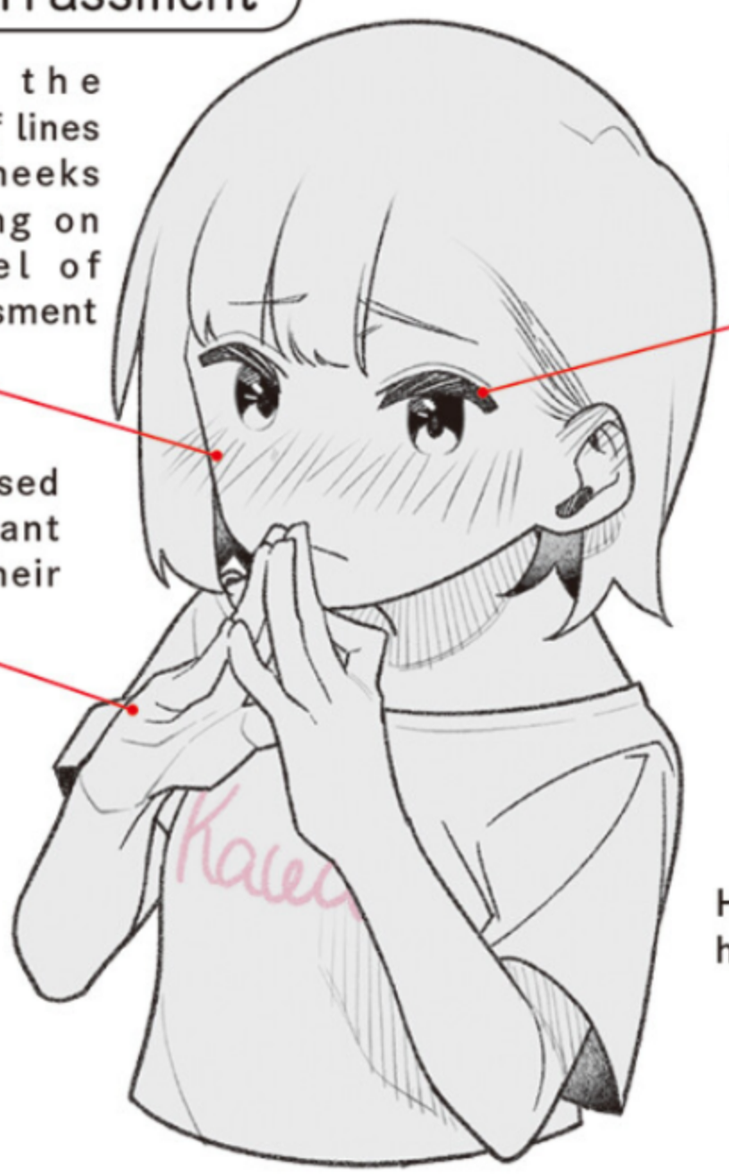
Eye and mouth size changes depending on degree of surprise

Slight surprise

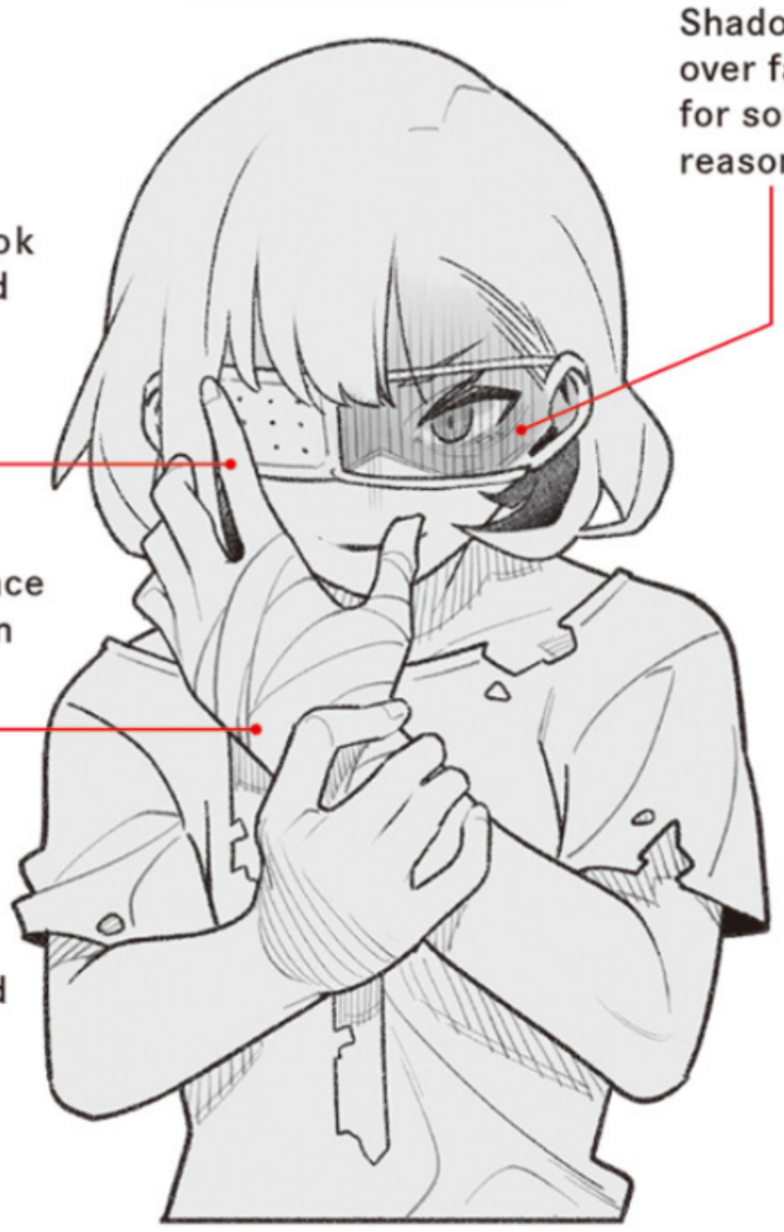
Huge surprise

Surprise is expressed with small pupils and a wide-open mouth

Embarrassment



Hidden Power



Chapter

1

Basic Poses

This chapter explains poses for basic postures and movements like standing, walking, and running. It also looks at common poses in drawing like floating and lying down.

Chapter 1

01

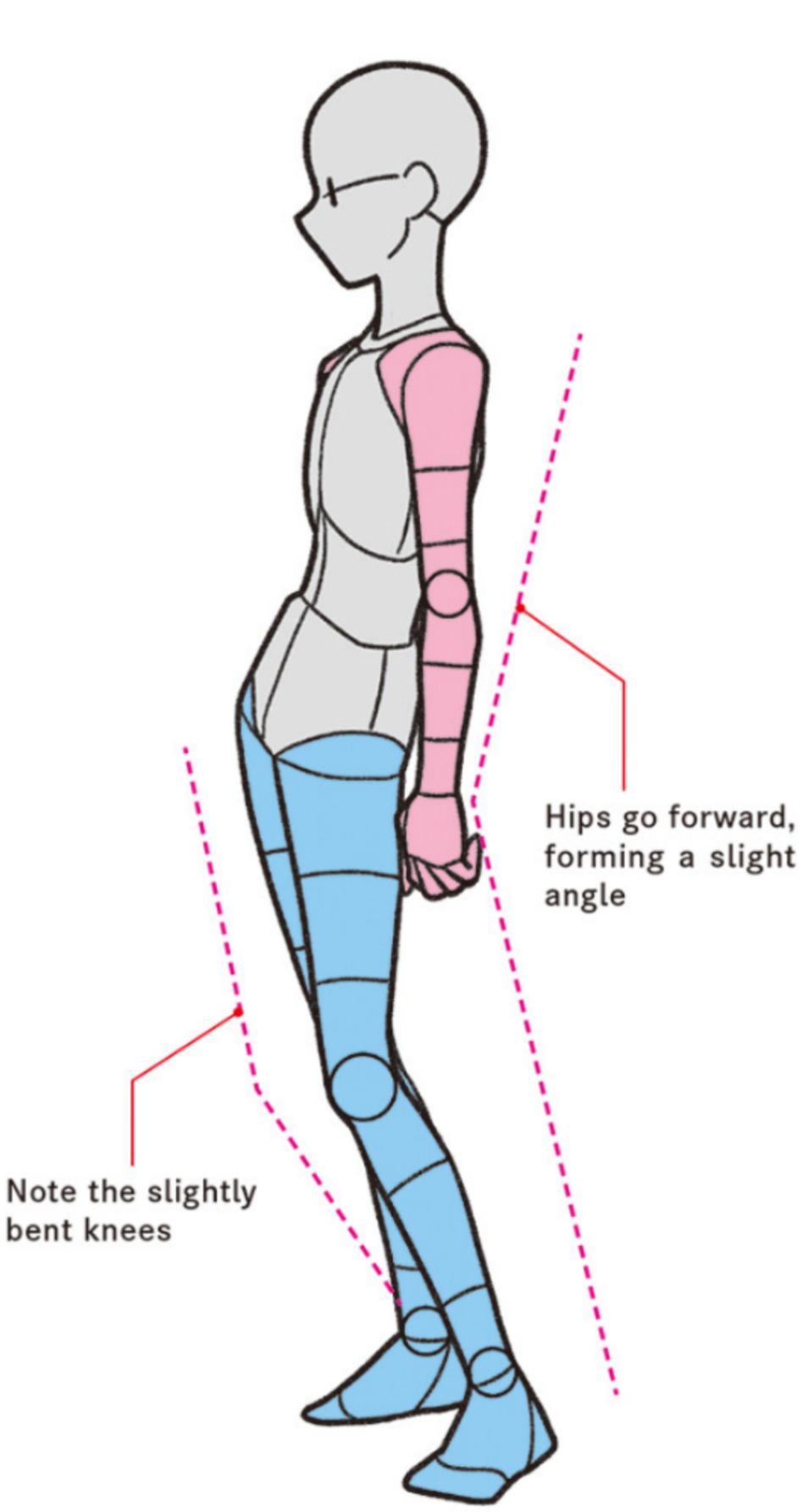
Basic Poses

Stand

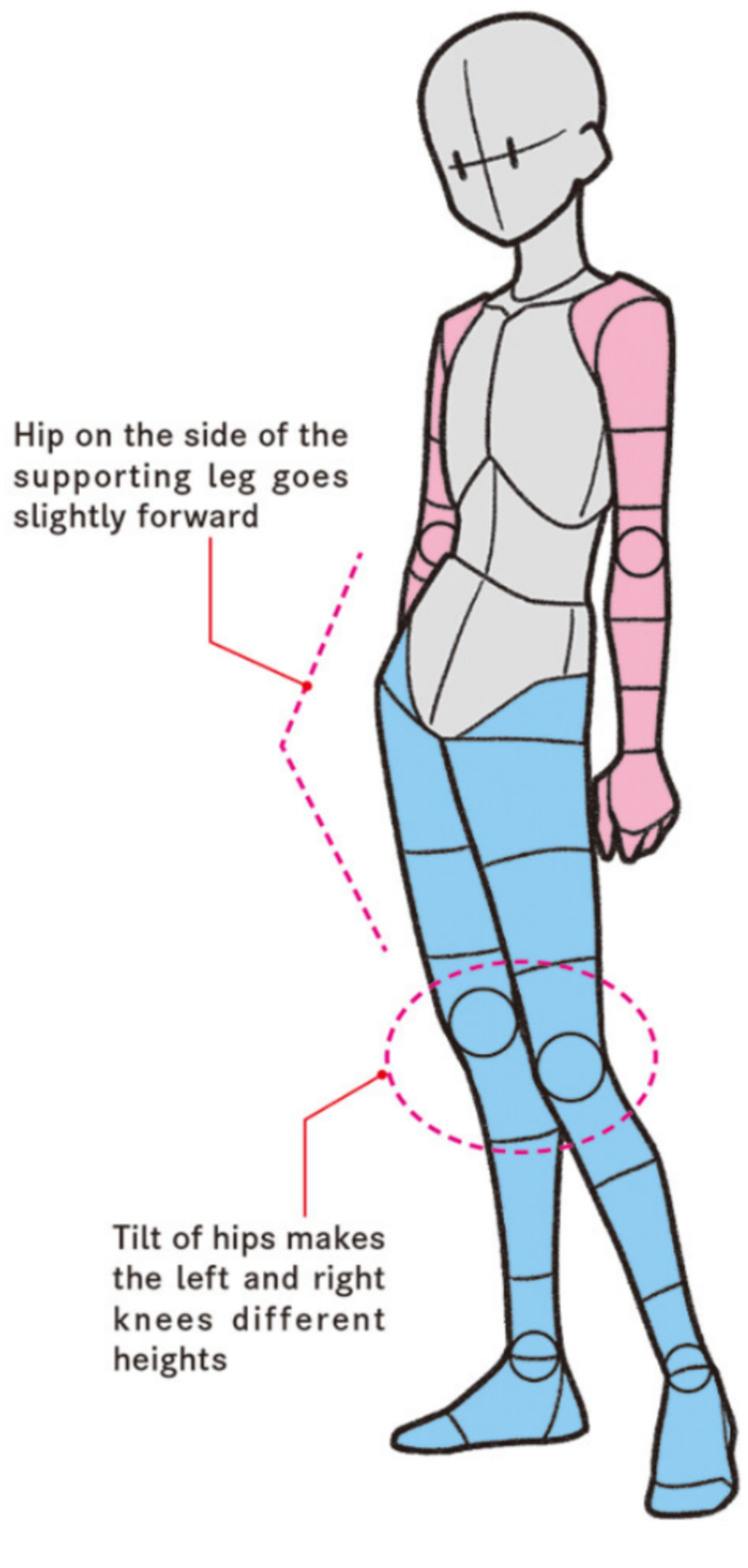
First, we will explain the basic standing pose. There are many ways to stand, and how you stand your character can show their personality. First, let's look at a natural standing pose with a focus on contrapposto.

Focus on Contrapposto

This is a natural standing pose with a focus on contrapposto (p.20), angling the hips and shoulders. A straight standing pose is fine, but putting the center of gravity on one foot with a focus on contrapposto makes a more natural-looking standing pose.



Side

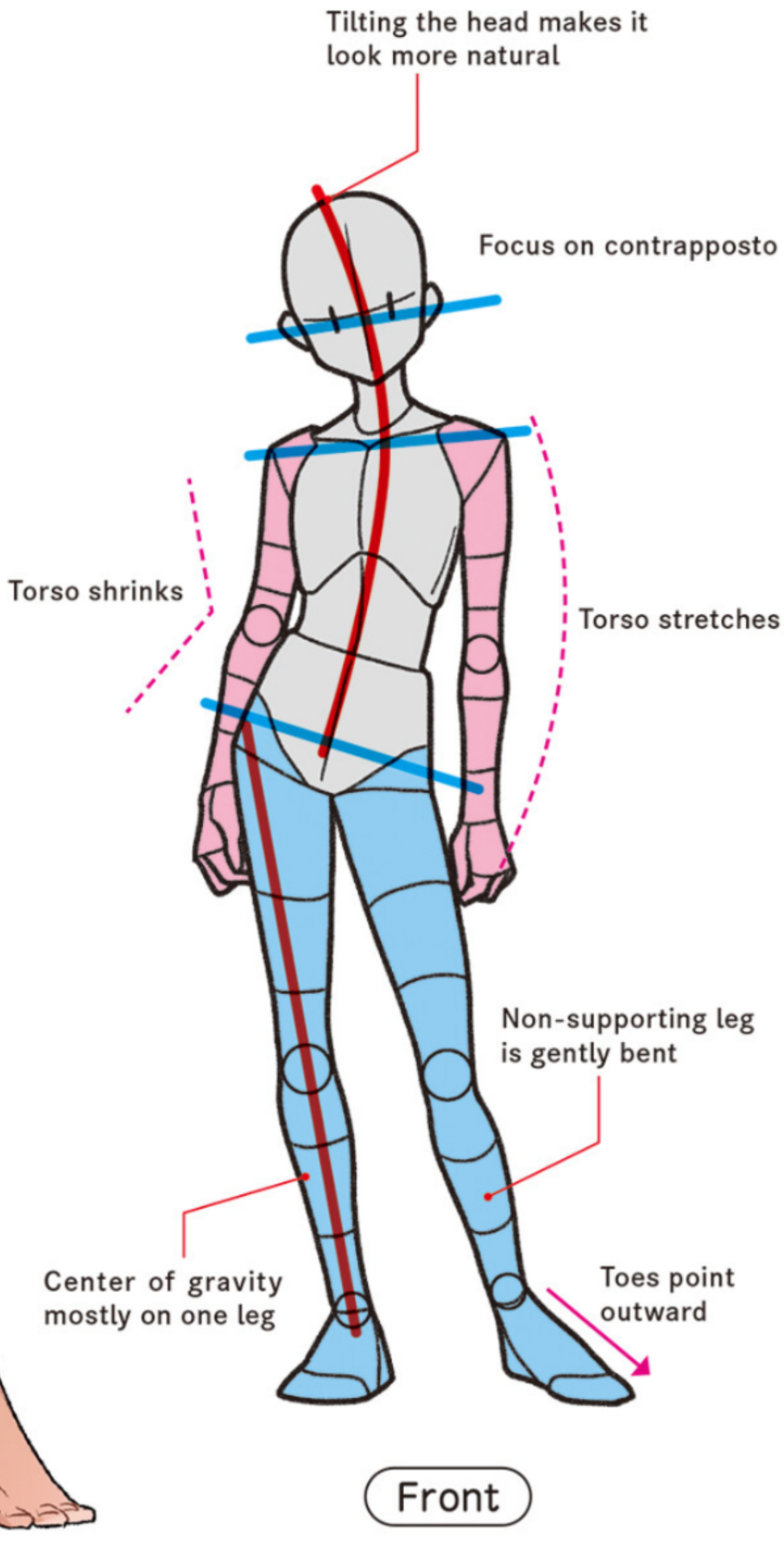


Angled

Pose Focus

Focus on angle

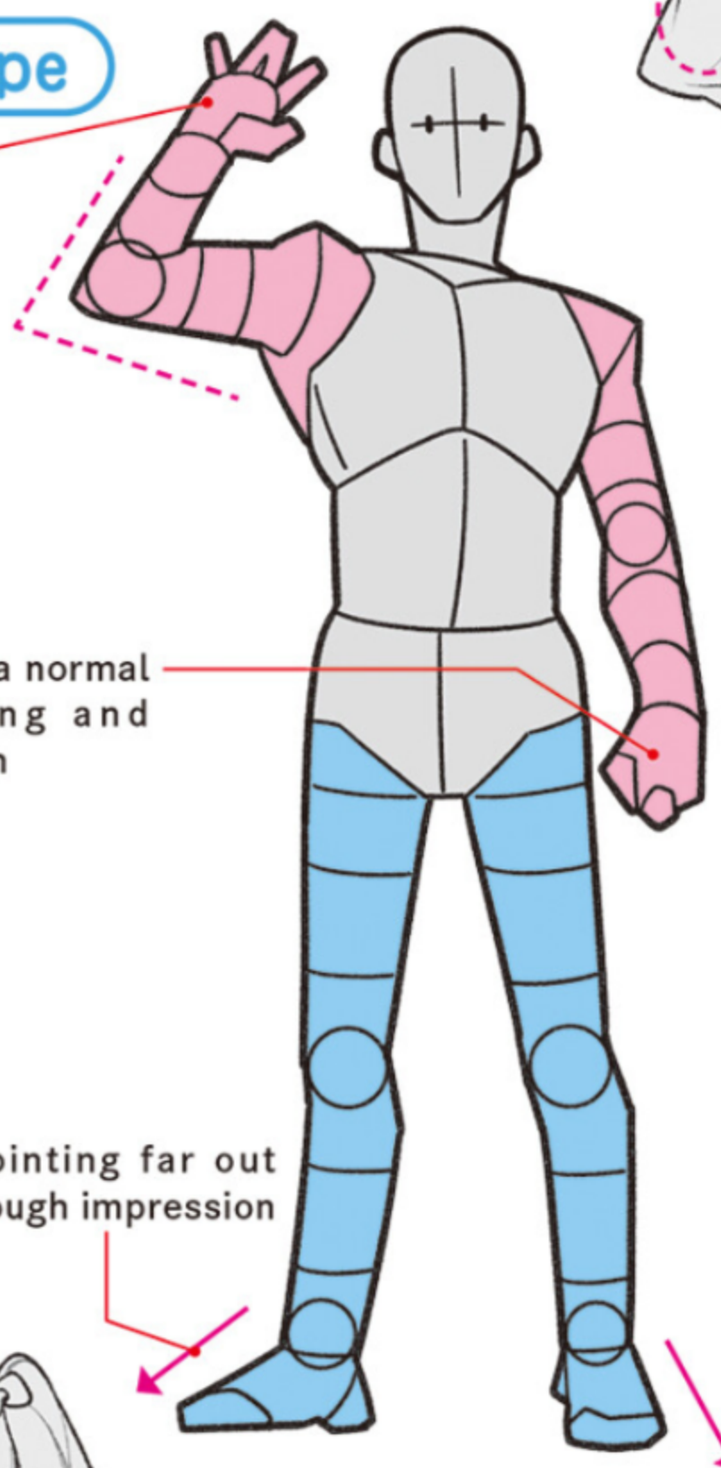
Contrapposto can be difficult even if you want to draw natural poses. If you're having trouble, push the hip out to the side at a slight angle and it'll help make your pose look more natural.



Male & Female Pose Differences

Poses change depending on personality. Here are the key points for male and female poses for standard personalities.

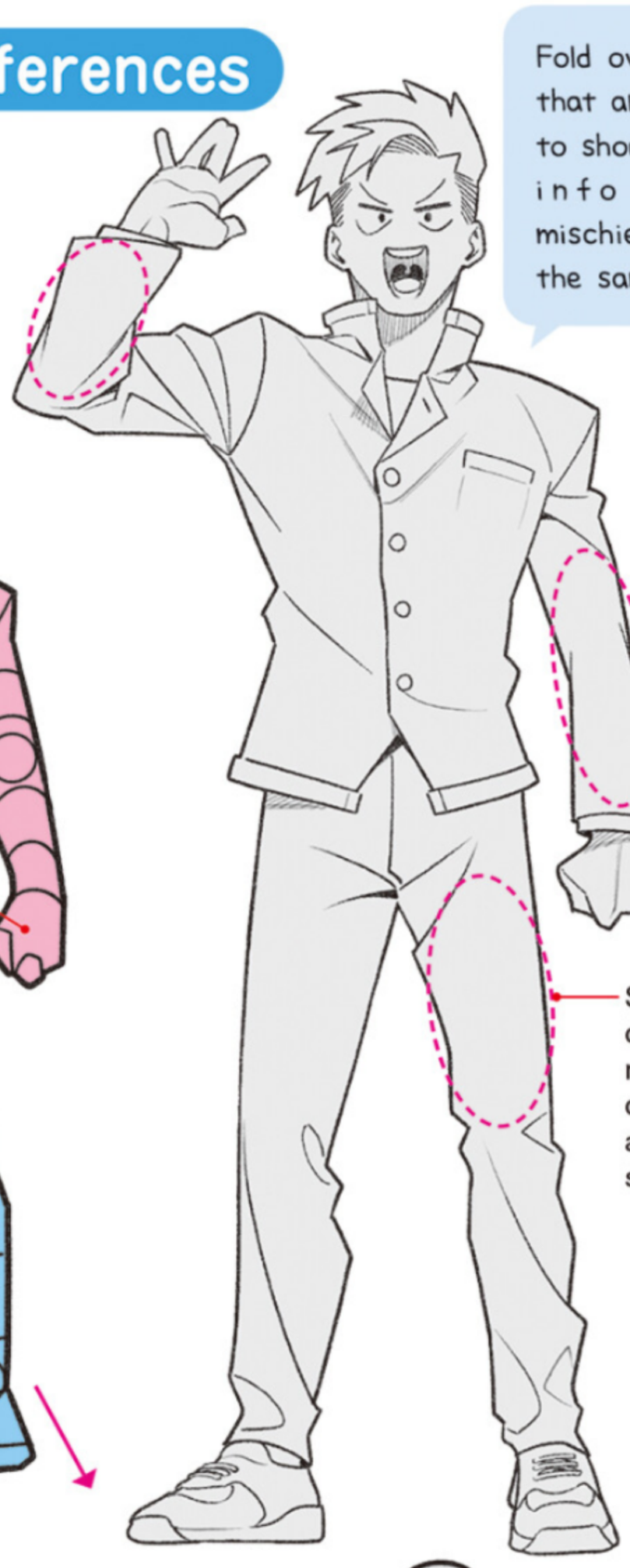
Active Type



Raised arm with palm bent back shows abundance of energy

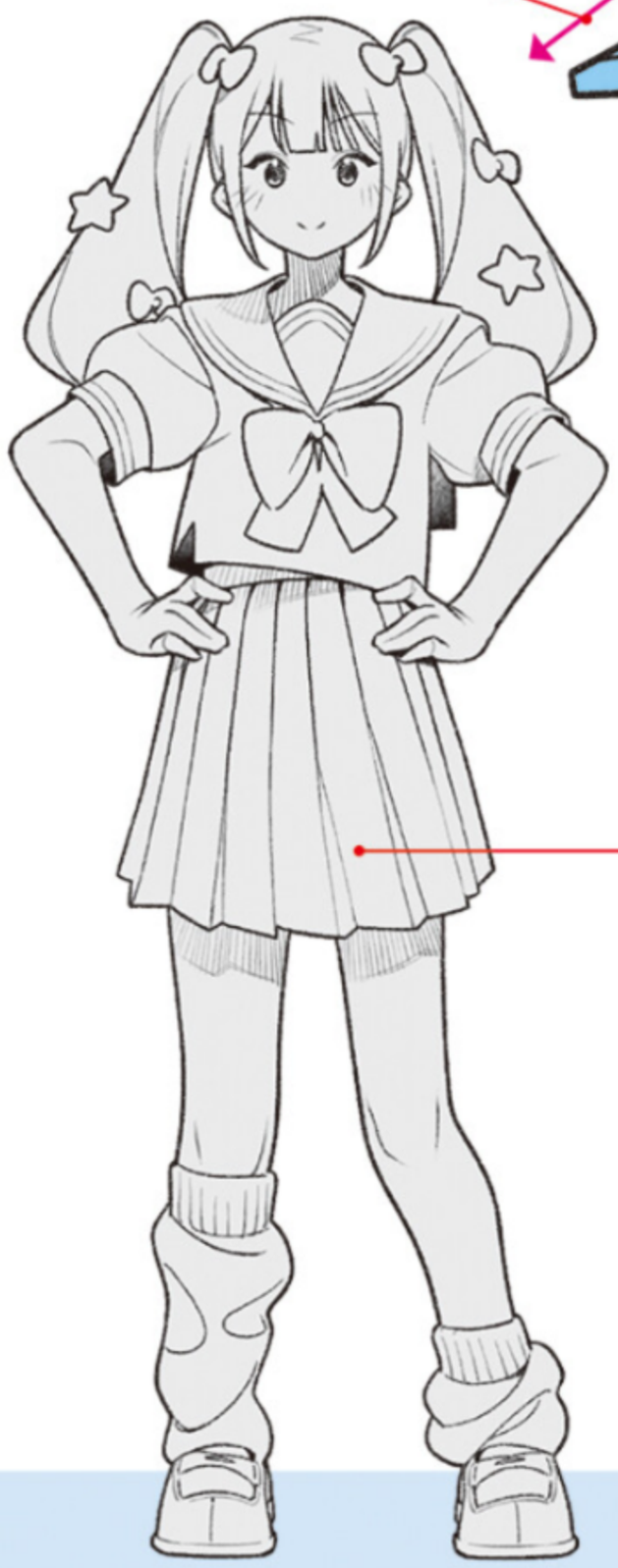
Clenched fist gives a normal greeting a strong and imposing impression

Toes pointing far out give a rough impression

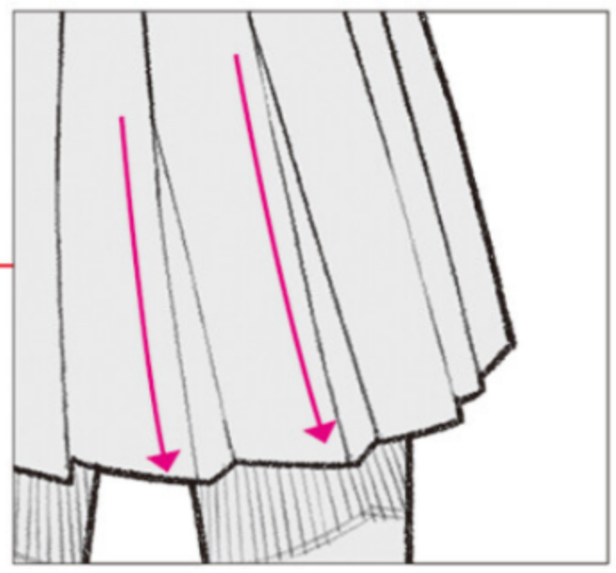


Fold over the parts that are unbuttoned to show more visual info and add mischievousness at the same time!

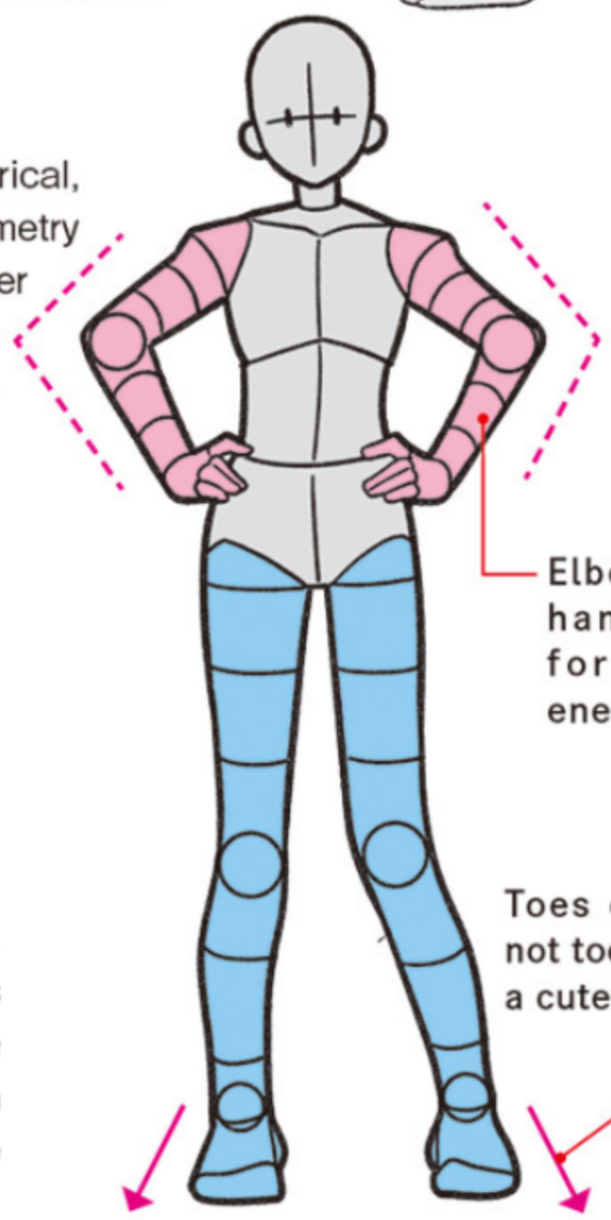
Stiff fabrics don't crease much, so you don't need to add creases for straight sections



When a pose looks symmetrical, adding a tilt or adding asymmetry can make the pose look better



Showing the surface of the pleats gives depth and increases the visual info, and having them at an angle in a still drawing can make them look like they are fluttering



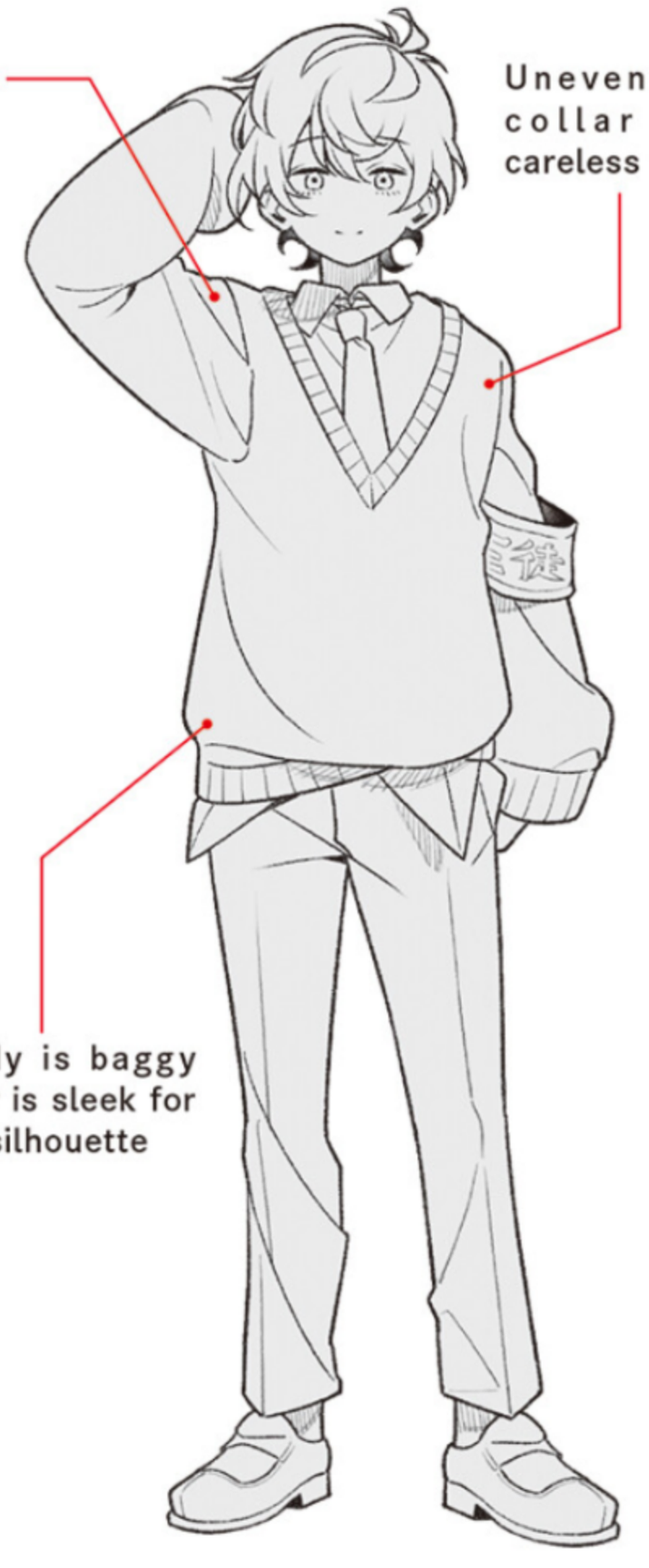
Elbows out and hands on hips for a fun and energetic look

Toes outward but not too out, to keep a cute impression

Cute Type

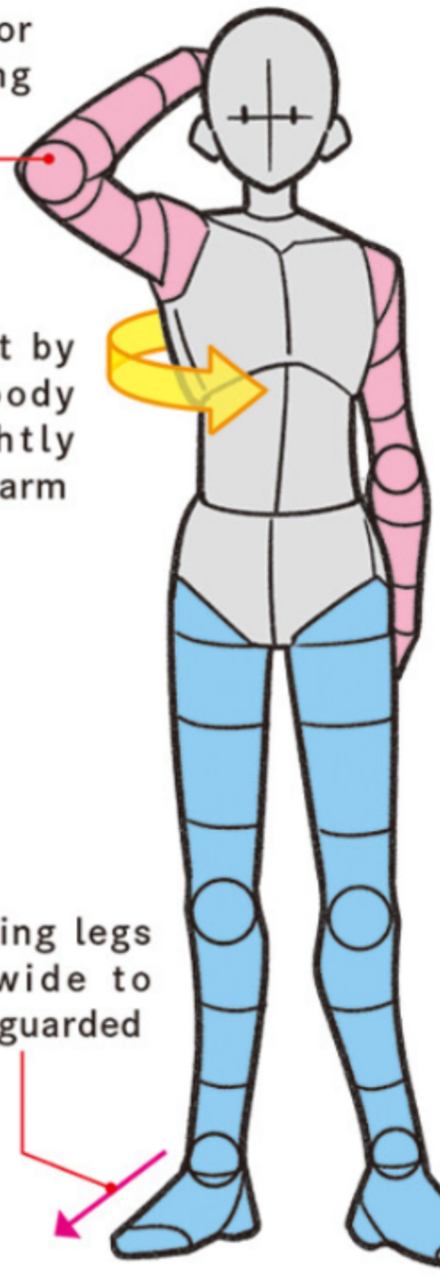
Relaxed wrinkles to match the character's image

Uneven cardigan collar shows a careless personality



Slightly raised arm for a lazy, power-saving feel

Add movement by twisting the body forward slightly with the raised arm

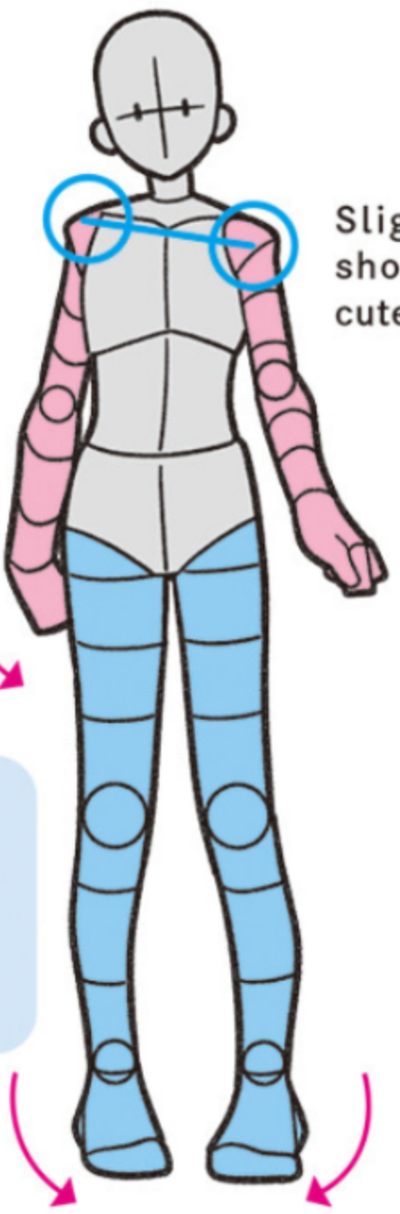


Spreading legs open wide to look unguarded

Upper body is baggy while lower is sleek for a dynamic silhouette

Thin neck and rounded shoulders for a more feminine look!

Slightly titled shoulders look cuter



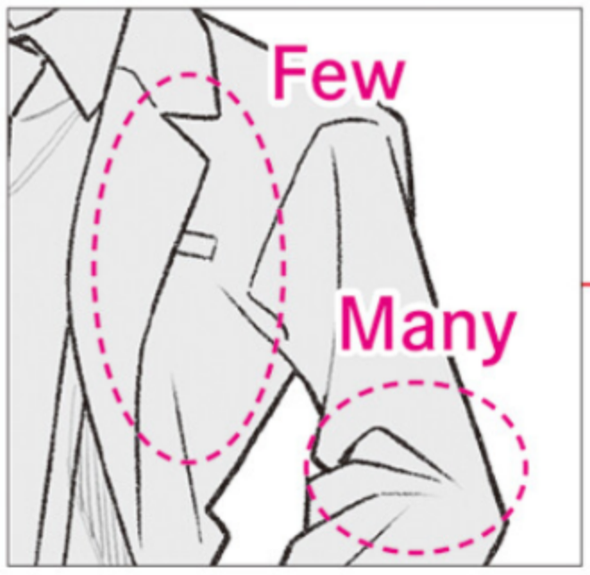
Slightly baggy cardigan and thin legs for a dynamic look

Pointing both the legs and hands inward make the character feel gentler.

Cool Type

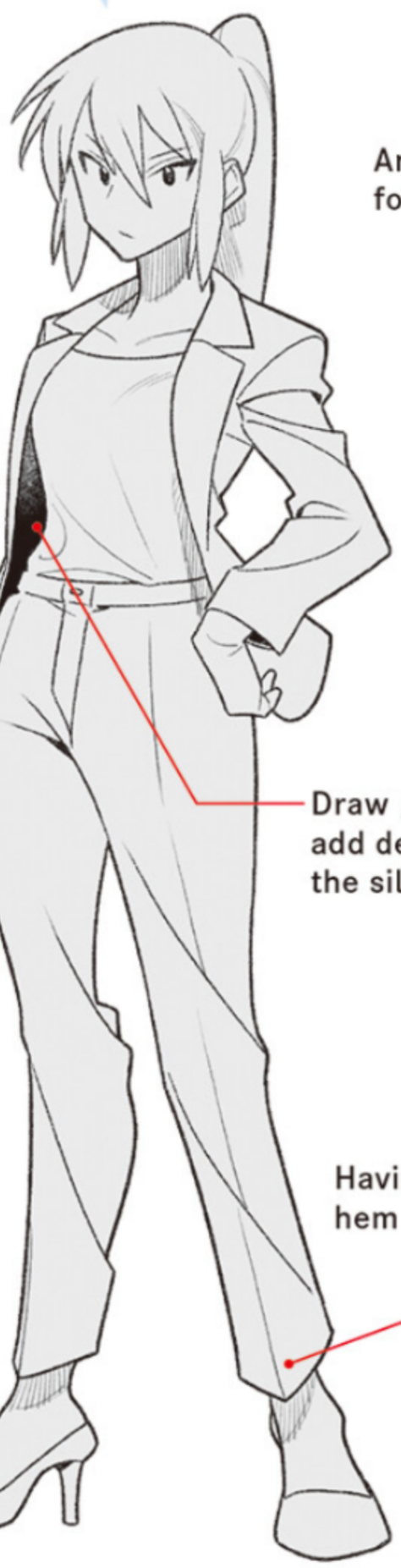
Sleek and slim silhouette for a cool look

Focus on straight lines with a slight angle for a natural pose



The suit body has fewer wrinkles while the arm has more, making the suit look better and more dynamic!

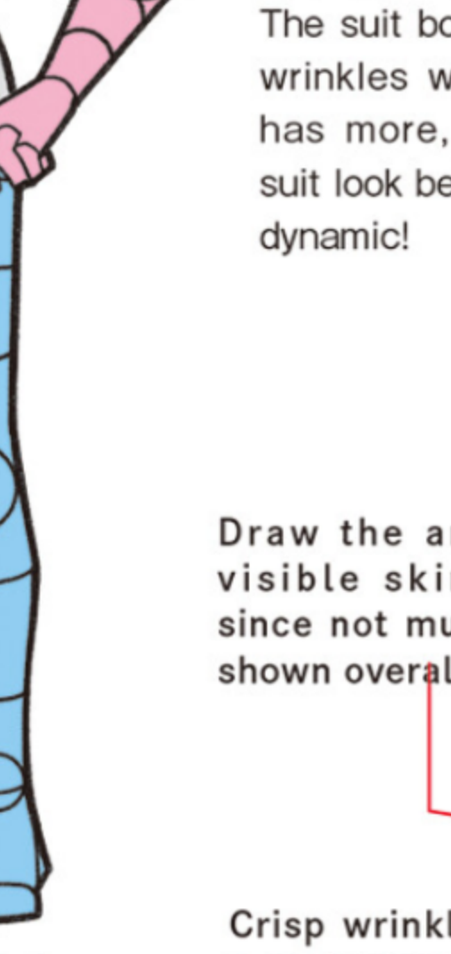
Improve the overall look by differentiating between the areas with wrinkles and without.



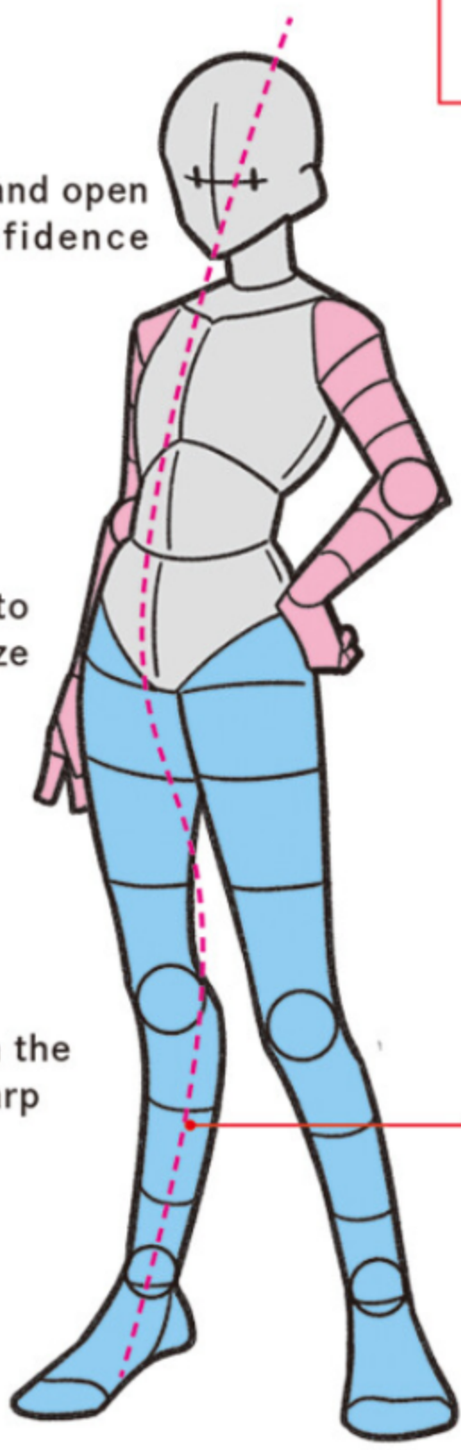
Draw gaps in clothing to add depth and emphasize the silhouette

Having space between the hem and leg looks sharp

Angling the feet slightly for a relaxed feel



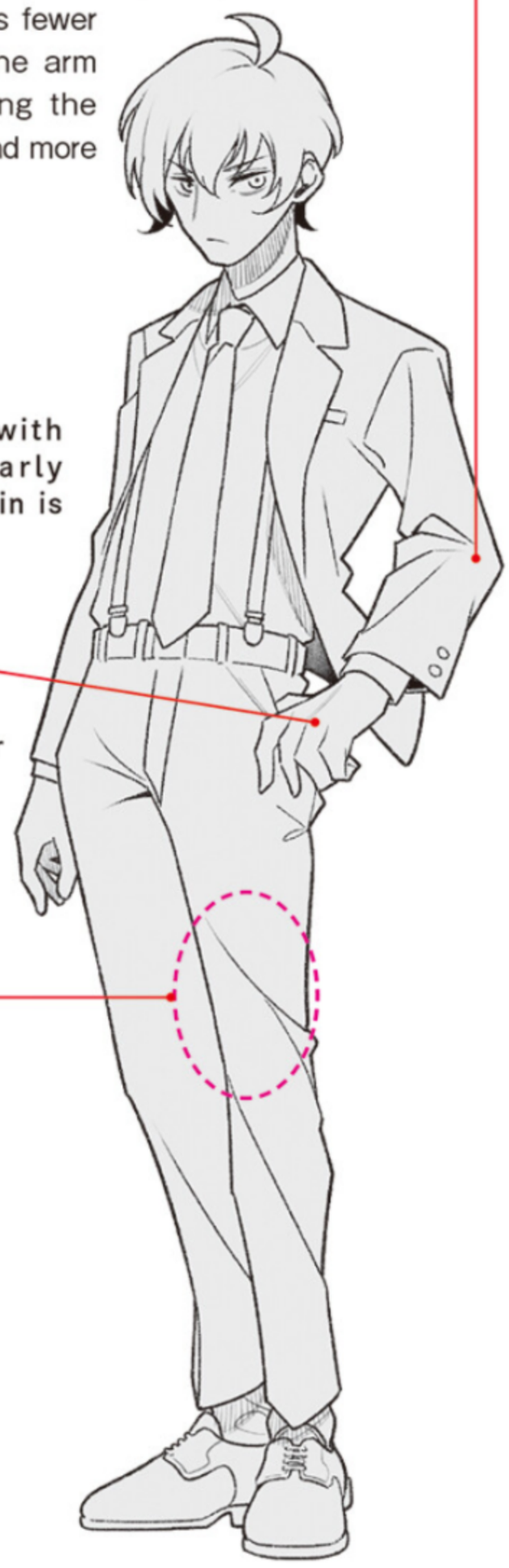
Outward chest and open legs show confidence and composure



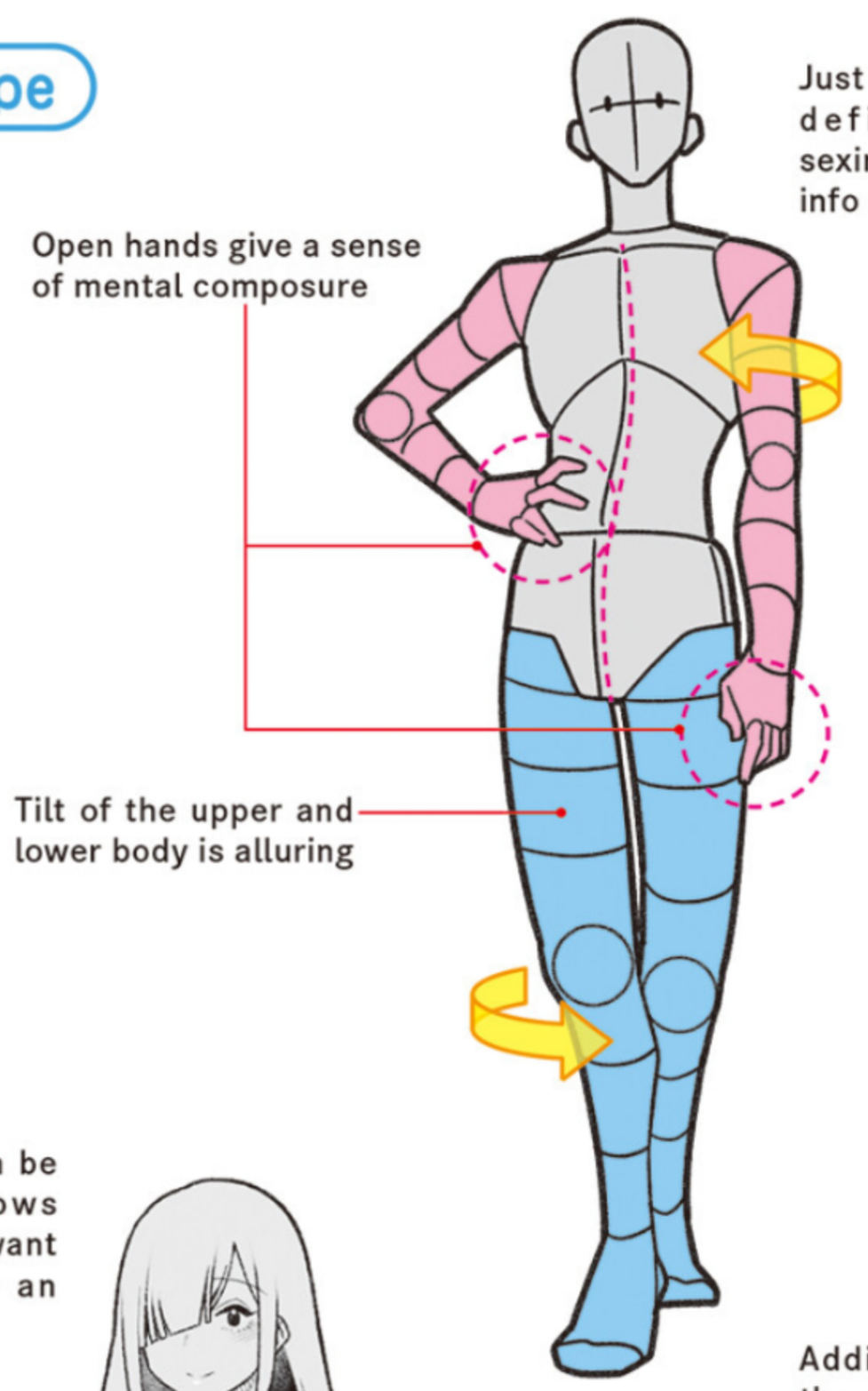
Smooth out the S-shape for a poised look

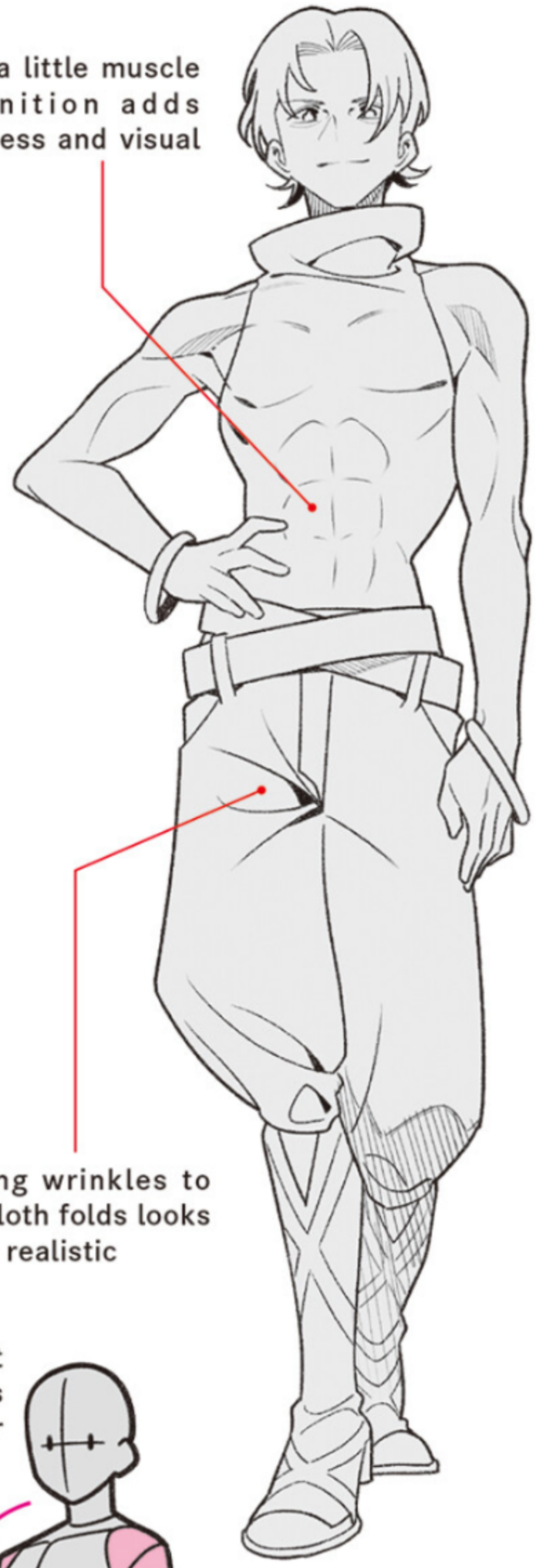
Draw the areas with visible skin clearly since not much skin is shown overall

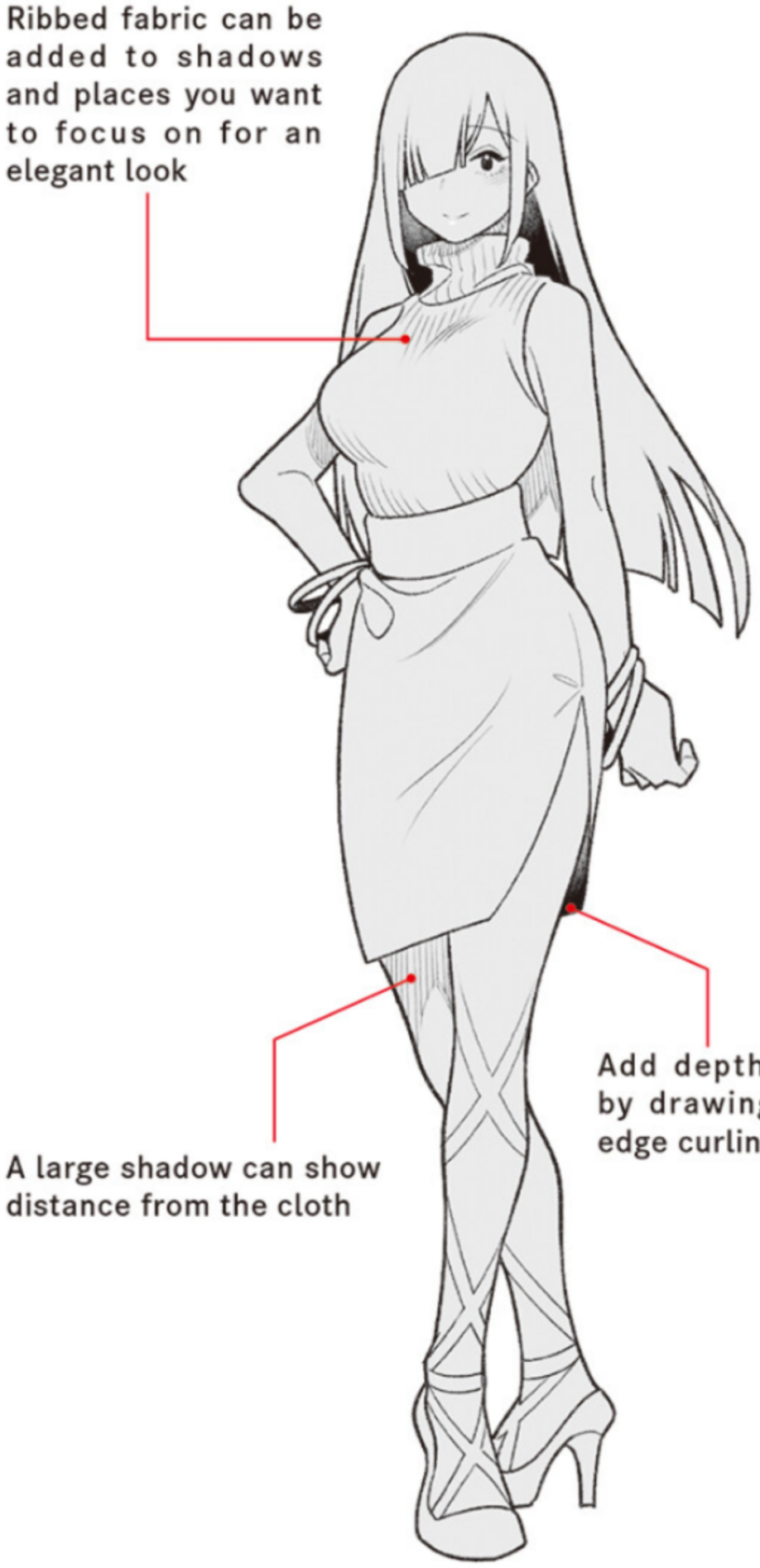
Crisp wrinkles for a cooler look

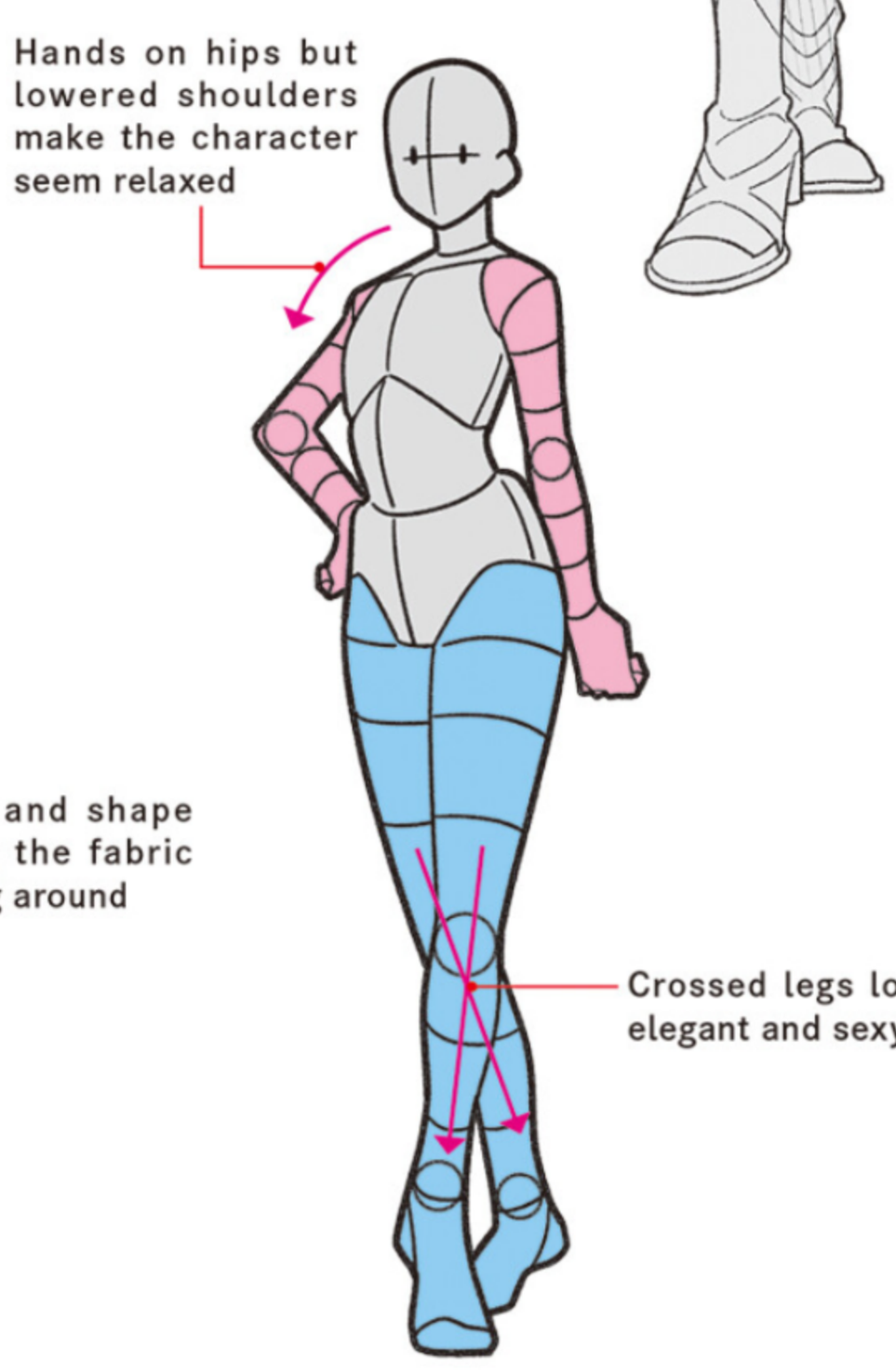


Sexy Type


Open hands give a sense of mental composure
Tilt of the upper and lower body is alluring


Just a little muscle definition adds sexiness and visual info
Adding wrinkles to the cloth folds looks more realistic


Ribbed fabric can be added to shadows and places you want to focus on for an elegant look
A large shadow can show distance from the cloth
Add depth and shape by drawing the fabric edge curling around

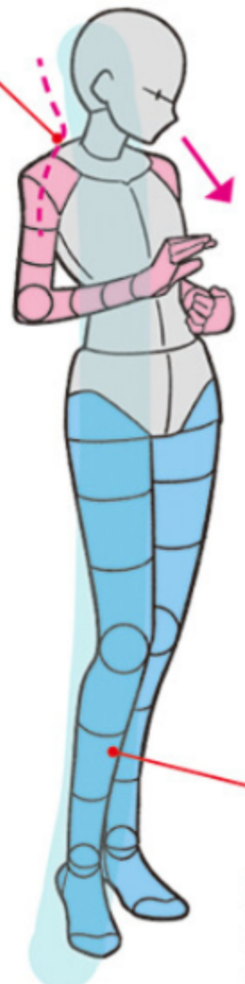

Hands on hips but lowered shoulders make the character seem relaxed
Crossed legs look elegant and sexy

Pose Silhouette

Here are standing poses in poses such as A and C, which were briefly discussed in Introduction: Silhouette Types (p.26). Note the impression given by each silhouette.

I Pose

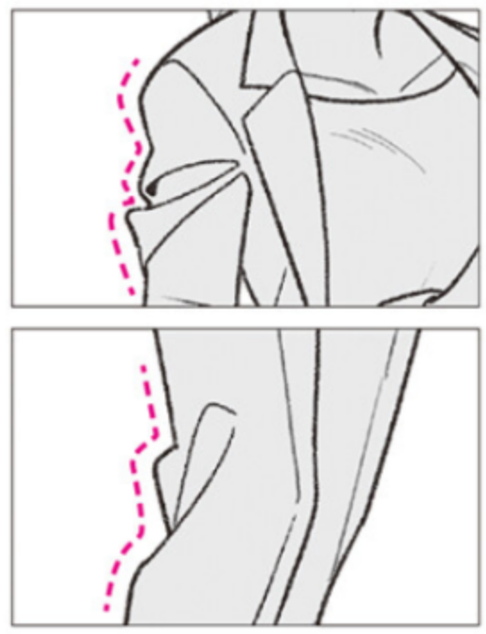
Make a gentle curve from the head to the back by bending the back backward and lowering the gaze



A pose that is too straight looks unnatural and boring, so don't make your I poses too straight

Be careful about the size of the item held (like a tablet) compared to the size of the character

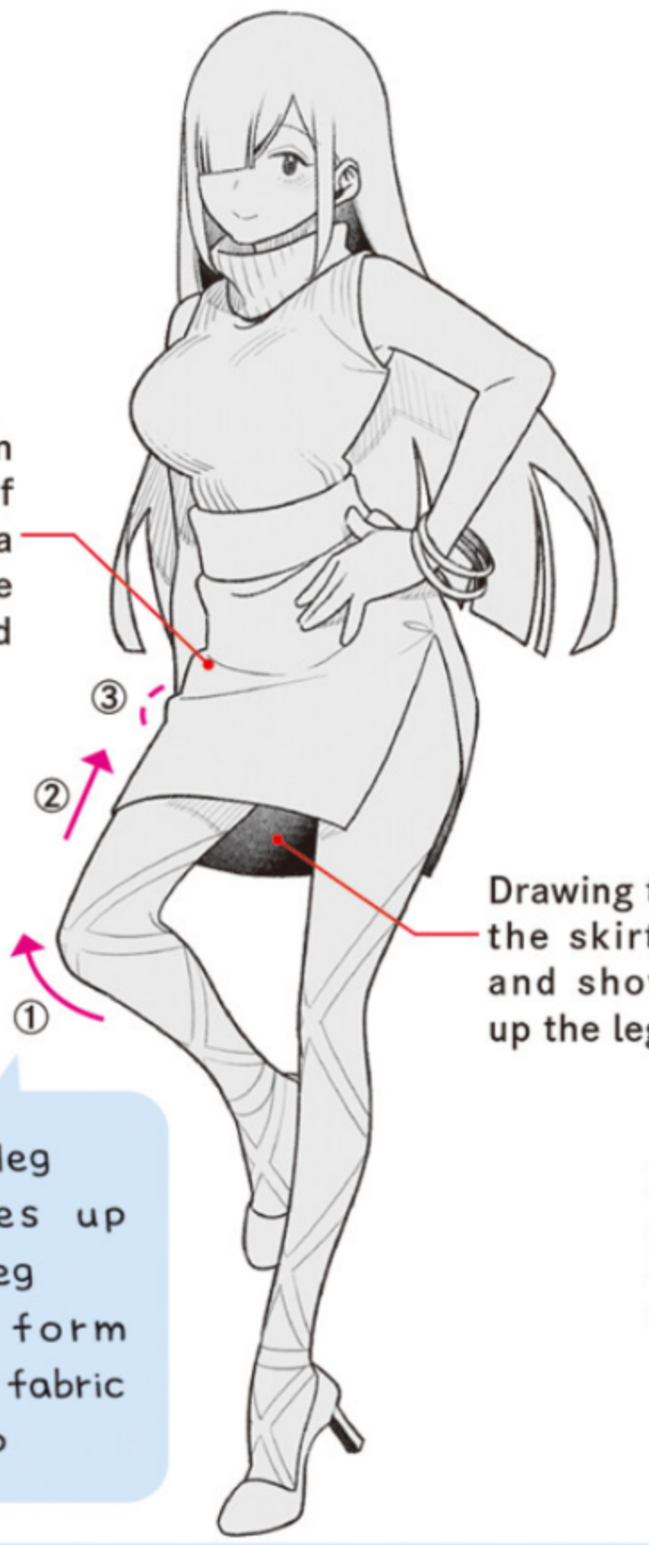
If it's too big or too small, it'll look unnatural.



Lines that are too straight are boring, so add creases to change up the silhouette

S Pose

Drawing creases in the raised fabric of bent legs makes a drawing more interesting and convincing!



Drawing the far side of the skirt adds depth and shows how high up the legs are

① Raise the leg
② Cloth goes up with the leg
③ Creases form where the fabric bunches up

Hand on the hip emphasizes the line of the waist, along with adding some nice negative space

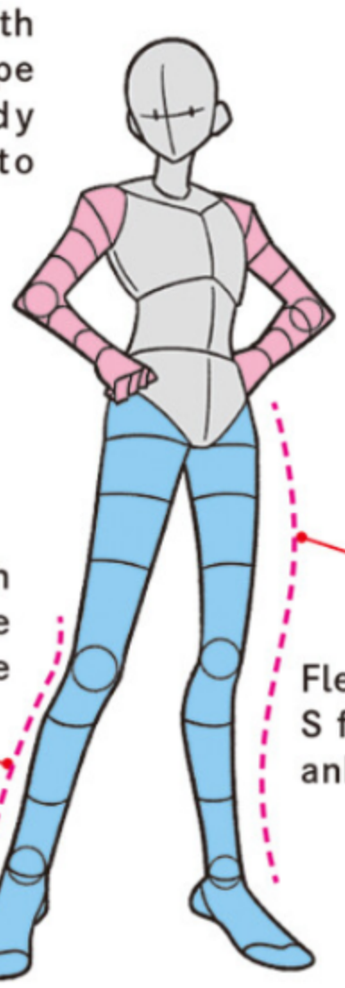
Butt pointing diagonally up for a feminine look

The key is to point it up at an angle!

Raising the leg opposite of the hand on the hip can create a reverse S

A Pose

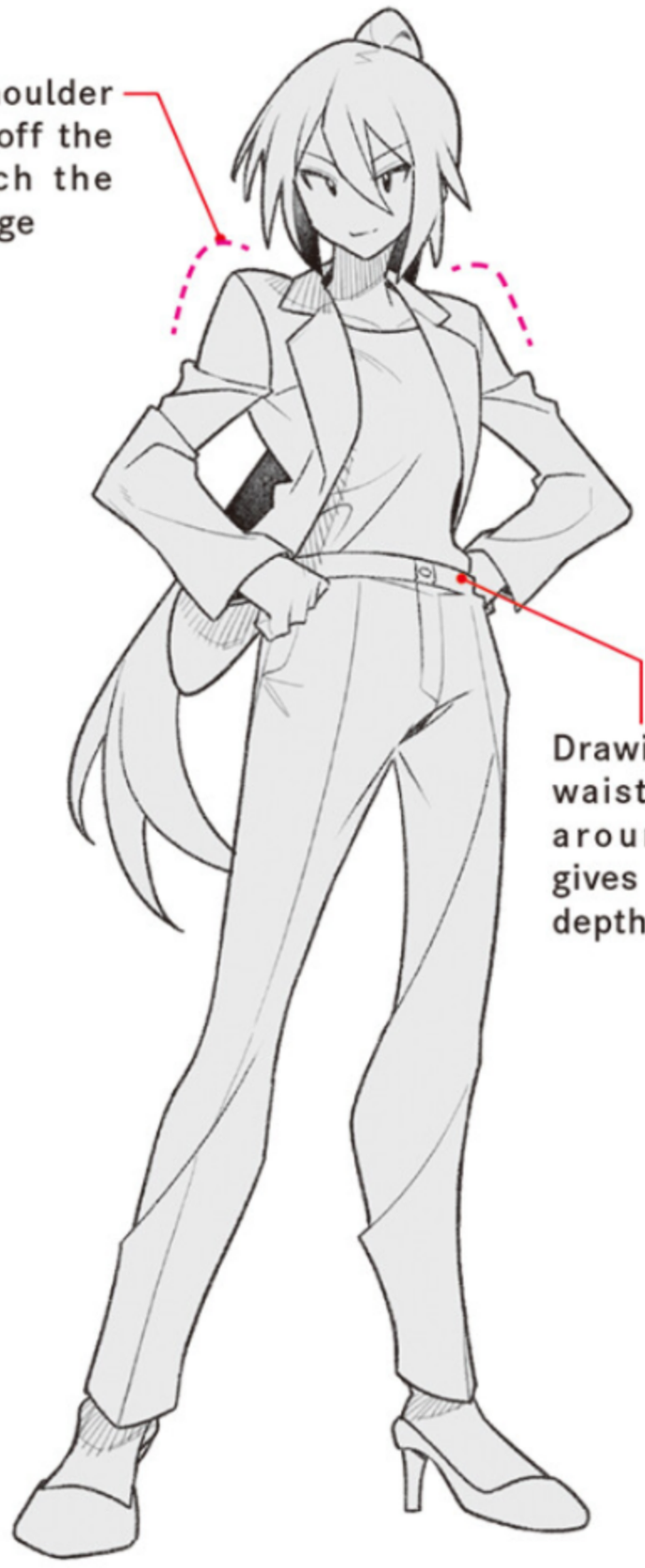
A standard A pose with a stable triangle shape and the upper body bent slightly back to express confidence



Cool silhouette with an outward curve from the knee to the ankle!

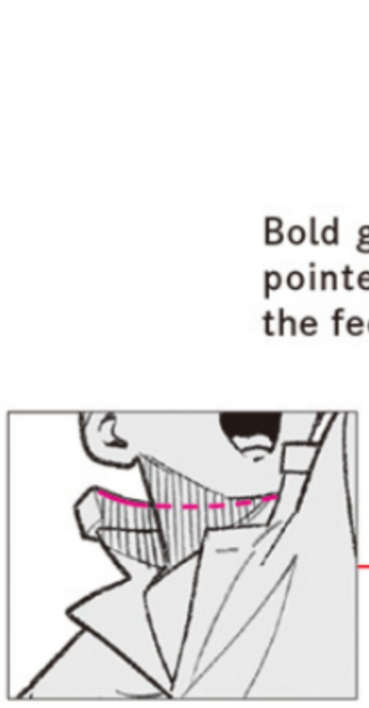
Flexible and feminine S from the hip to the ankle

Emphasis on the shoulder silhouette to show off the shoulders to match the character's cool image



Drawing the slacks' waistline carefully around the waist gives it a convincing depth

Bold gaze looking at the pointed finger to match the feel of the pose

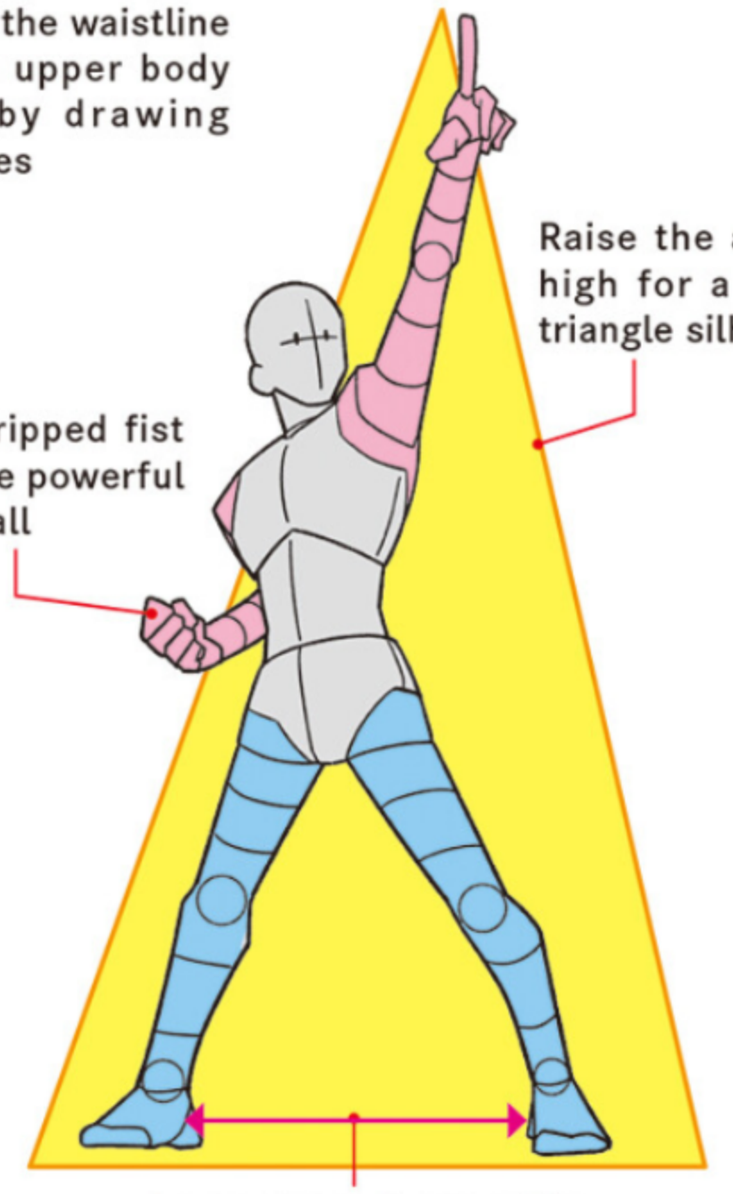


Keep the hidden section of the collar in mind to make it feel 3D

Put a focus on the waistline and make the upper body look larger by drawing dynamic creases

Tightly gripped fist for a more powerful feel overall

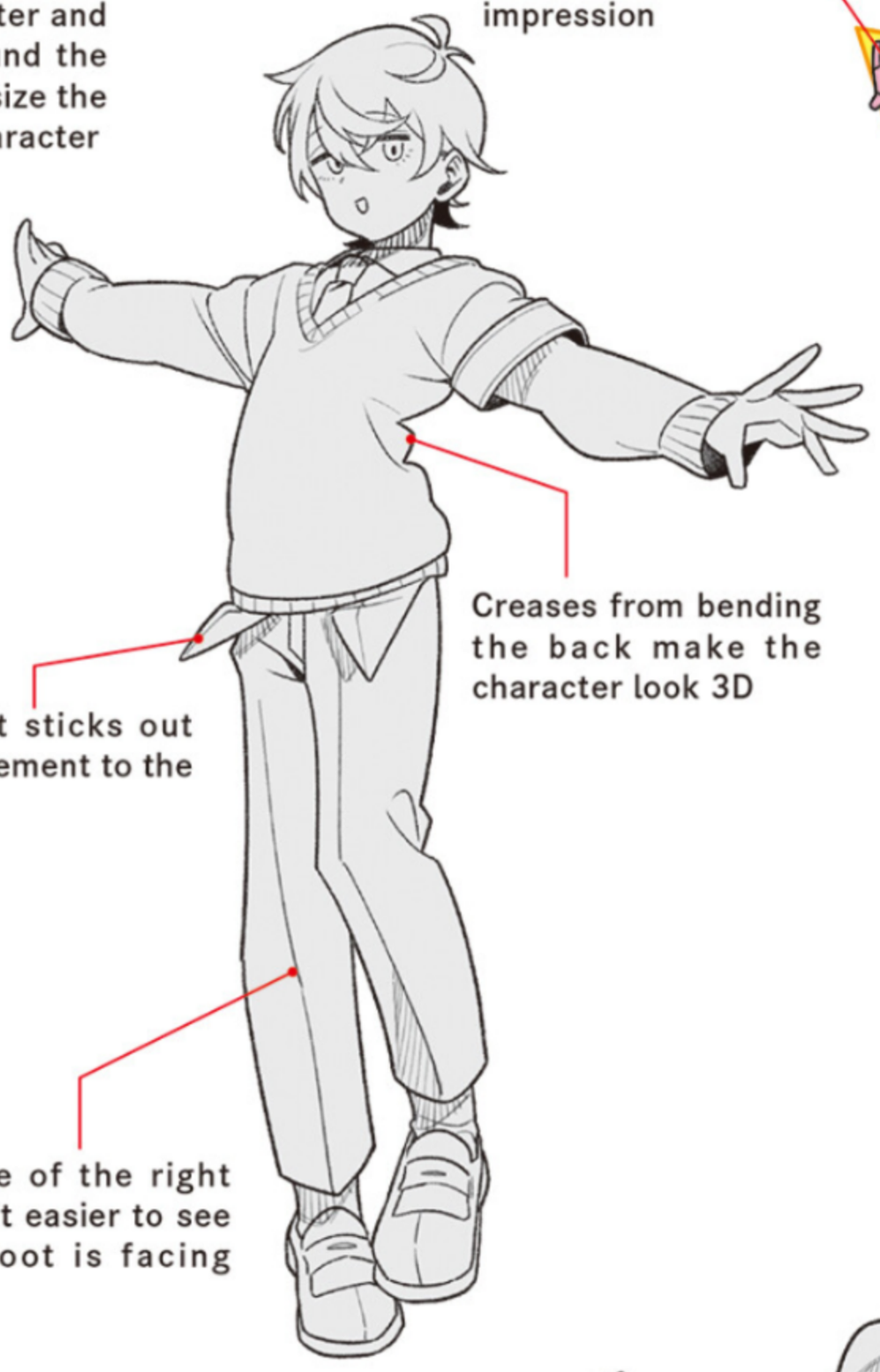
Raise the arm up high for a larger triangle silhouette



Legs spread out wide for a heavy and stable impression

V Pose

Add more focus on the curves of the sweater and don't forget to round the wrinkles to emphasize the cuteness of the character

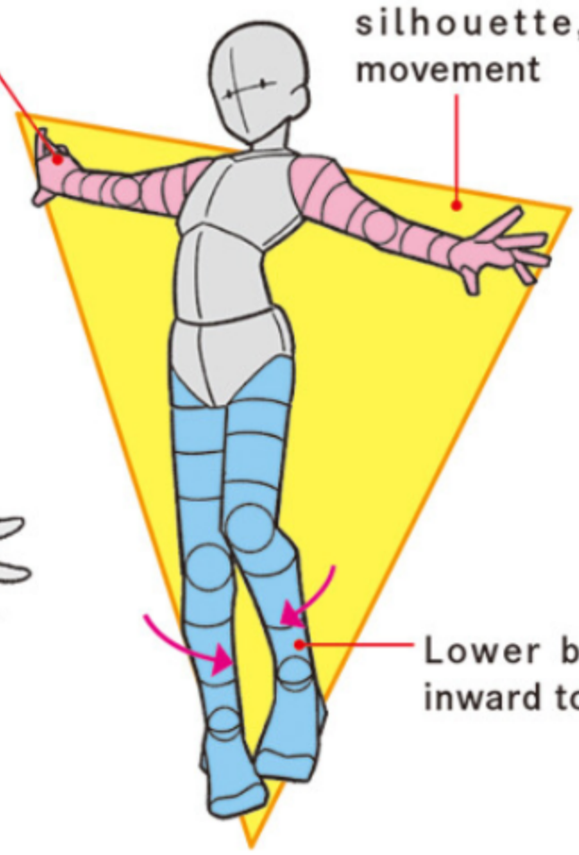


Upper body faces out for an active impression

Creases from bending the back make the character look 3D

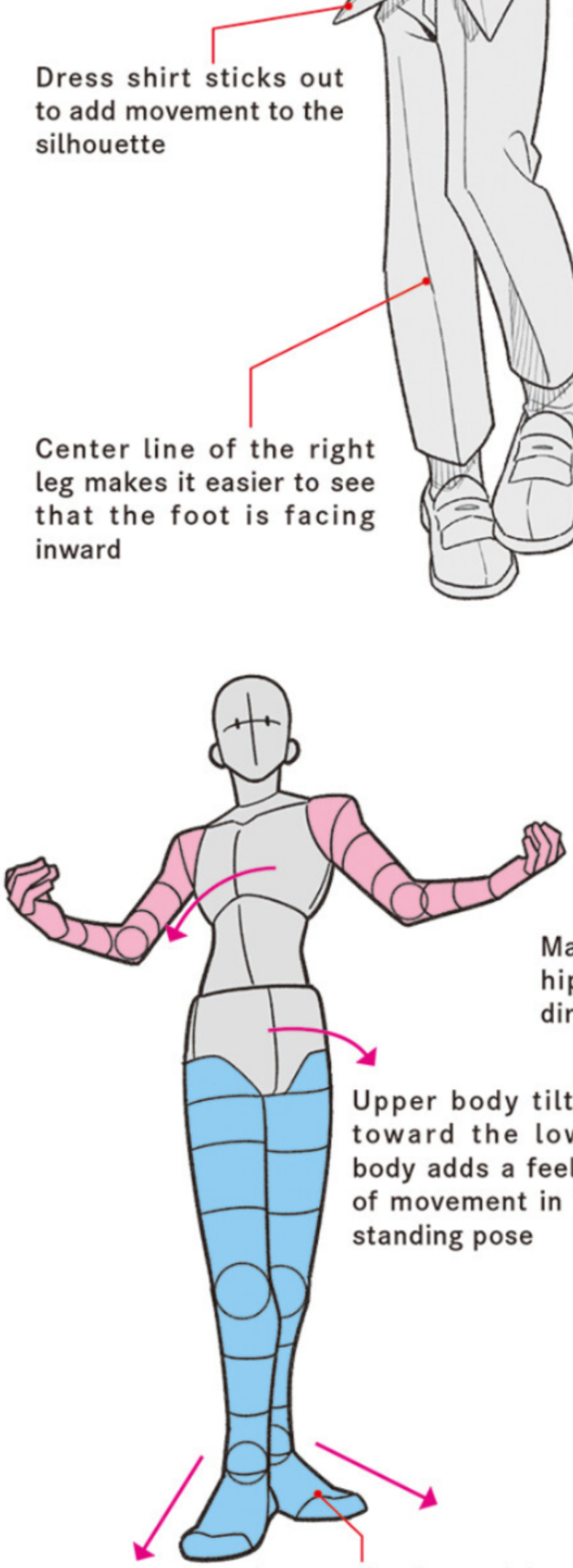
Dress shirt sticks out to add movement to the silhouette

Center line of the right leg makes it easier to see that the foot is facing inward



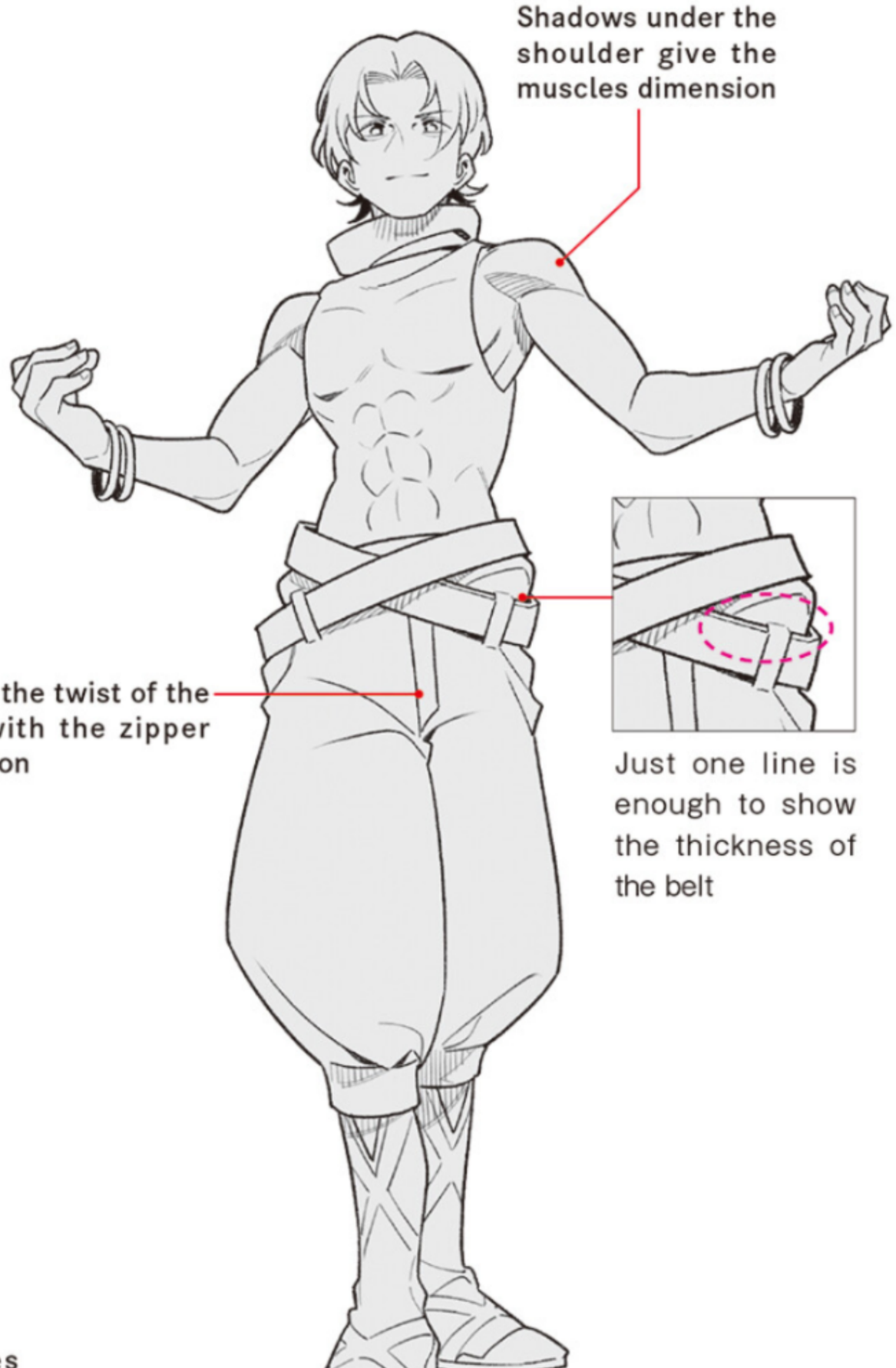
Arms spread out wide for a reverse triangle silhouette, showing movement

Lower body turns inward to look cute



Upper body tilting toward the lower body adds a feeling of movement in the standing pose

Legs point inward but toes point out for a theatrical feel

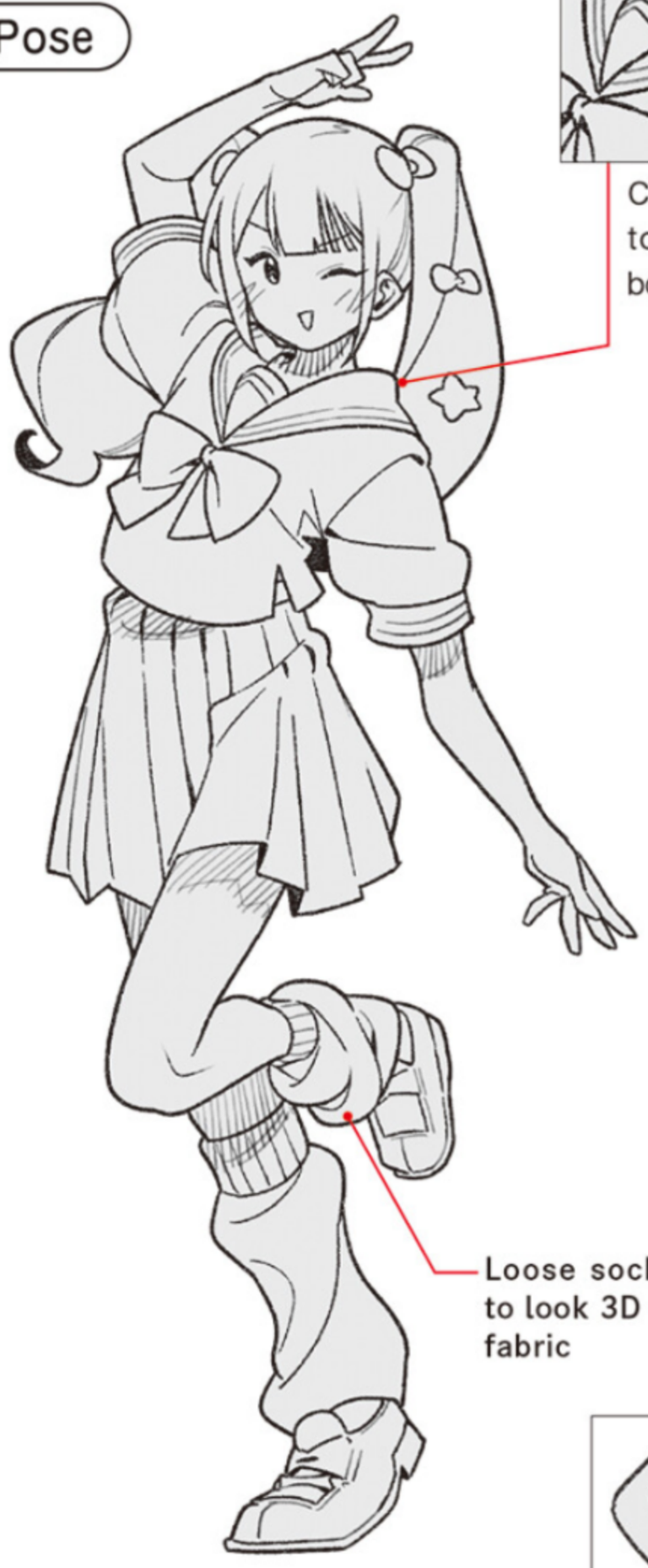


Shadows under the shoulder give the muscles dimension

Match the twist of the hips with the zipper direction

Just one line is enough to show the thickness of the belt

C Pose



Collar wraps around to give the whole body depth

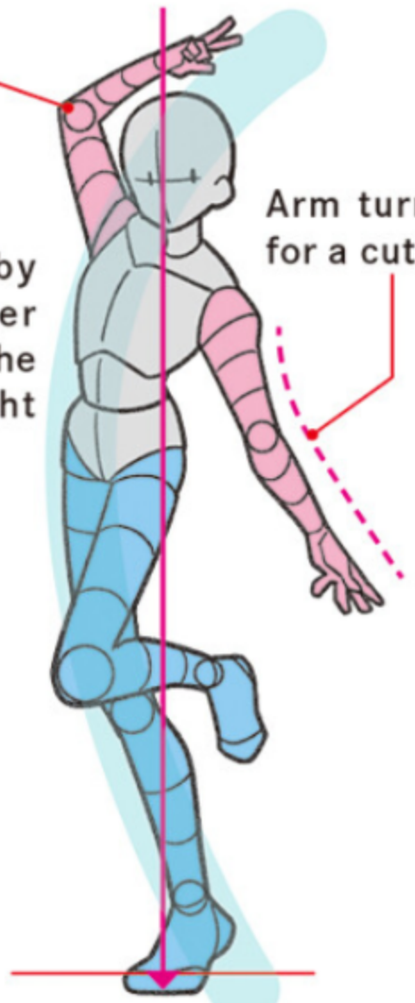
Loose socks pushed down to look 3D with overlapping fabric

Draw fabric clearly to show the cute oversized sweater

Left leg and right arm both bend to match

Arm turned outward for a cute impression

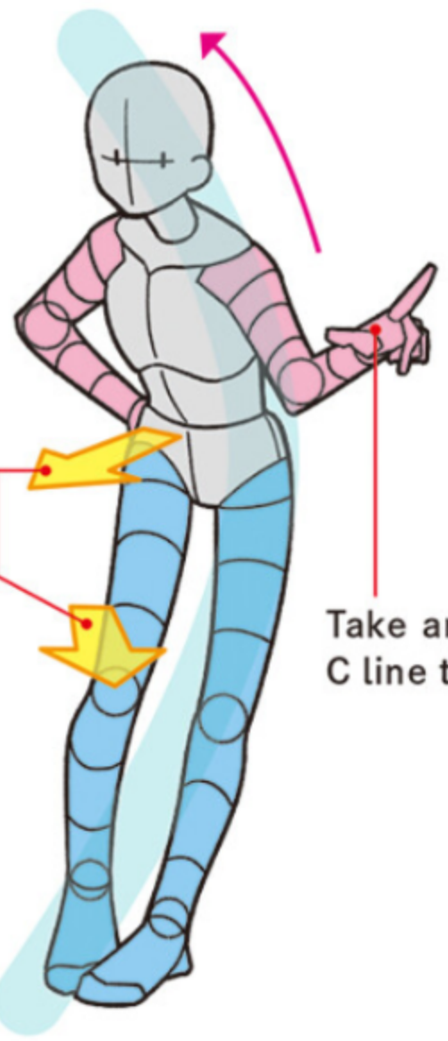
Add movement by bending the upper body right up to the point that it might fall over



Add expression to the hand for an extra highlight

Turn up part of the skirt to show the way the leg is facing and look cuter

Upper body tilted forward to form a C



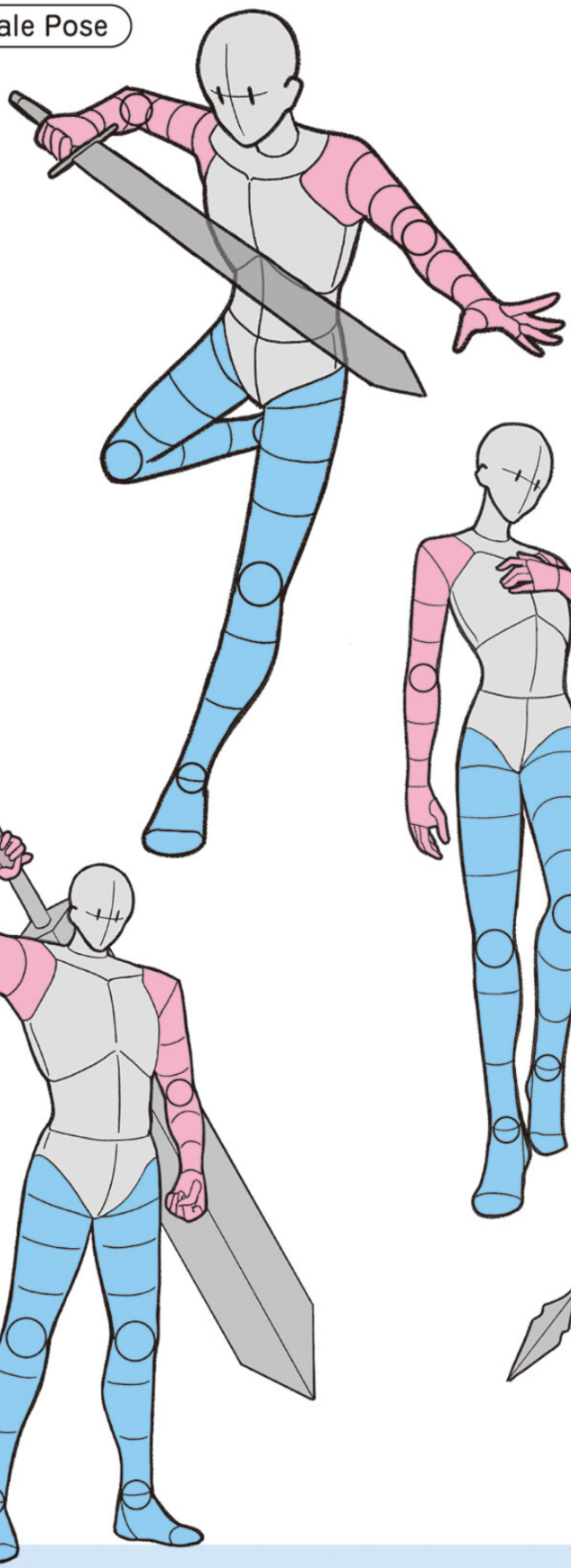
Use tilt to show hips and feet turning different directions

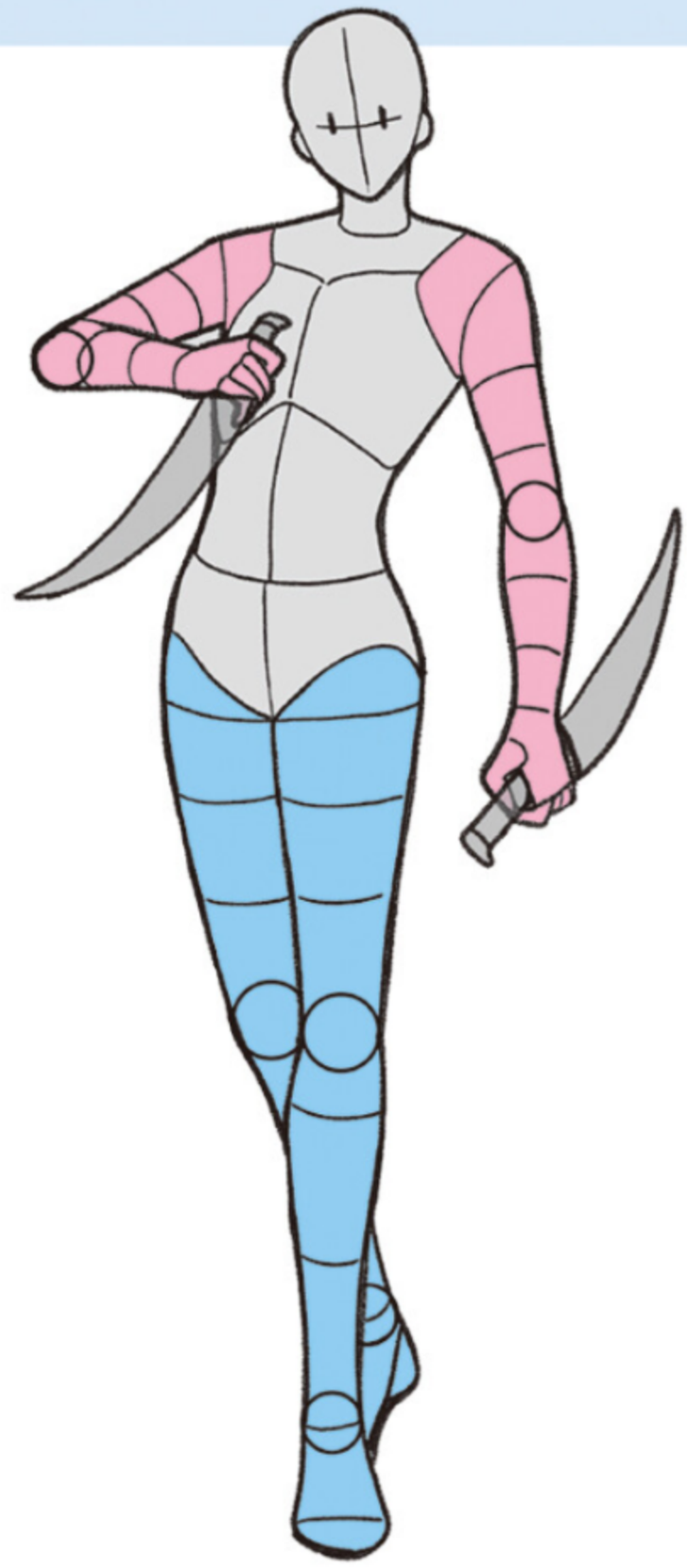
Take arm out of the C line to highlight it

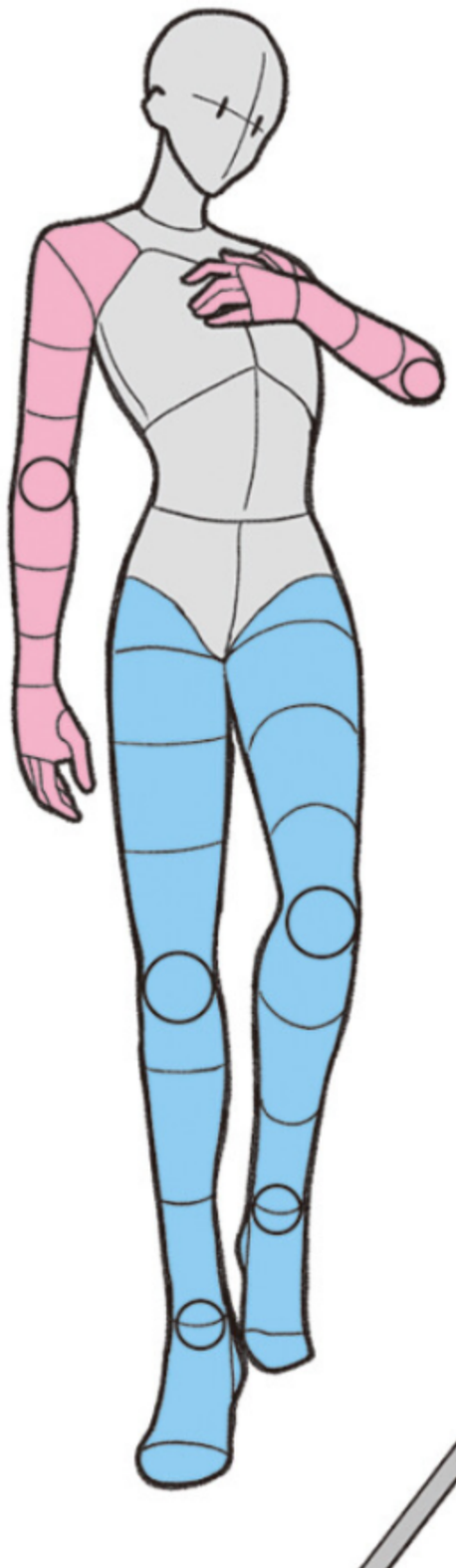
Stand Variations

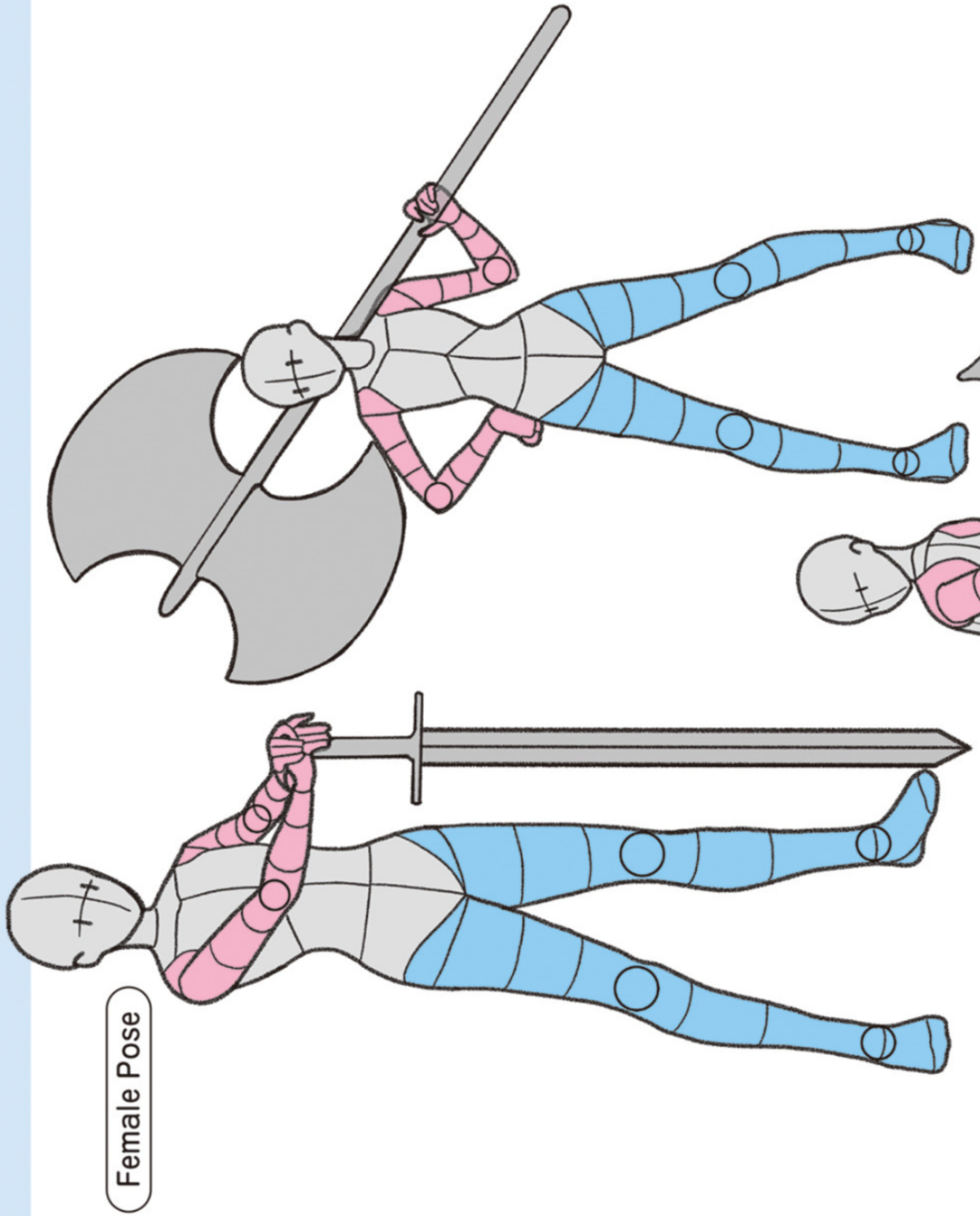
Here are some standing poses that look like they could be from a game. Use them for copying, tracing, and brainstorming.

Male Pose

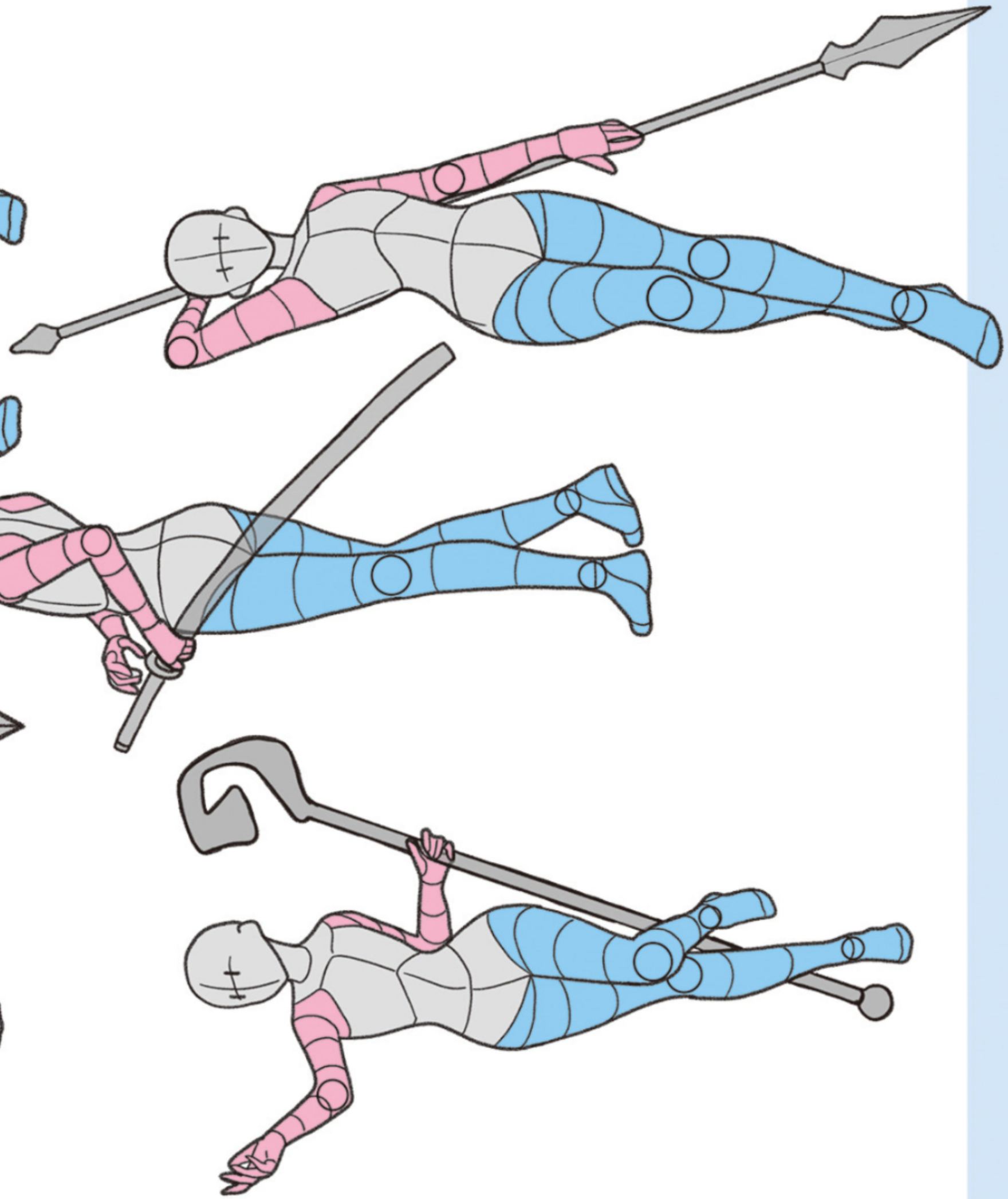








Female Pose



Basic Poses

Walk

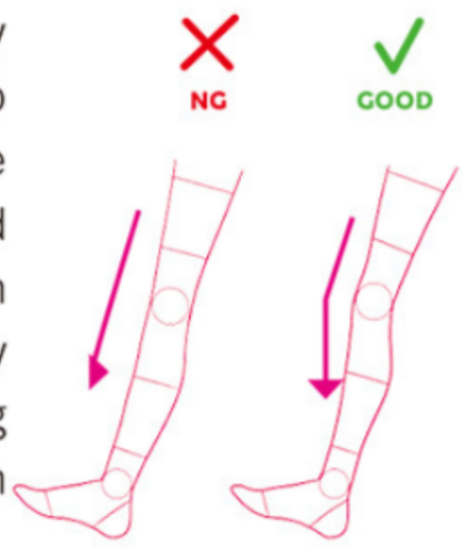
Walking is another standard pose. How the arms swing and legs move can greatly change the pose's impression, and the way the body is angled can express the character's personality. Make the arm and leg movement fit the character.

Focus on the Whole Body

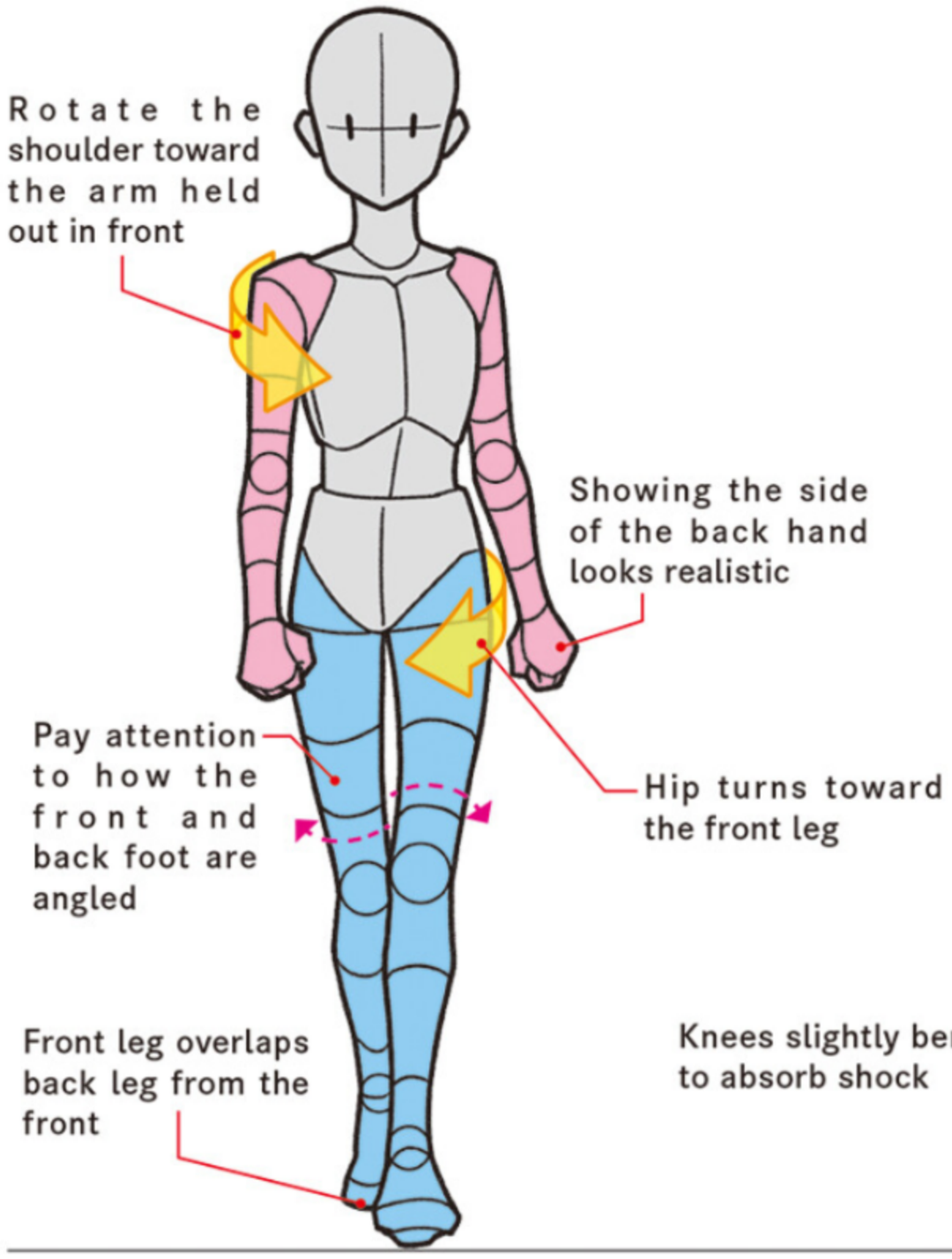
For the walking pose, the movement of the arms and legs as well as the angle of the upper body are important. Having so many things to keep in mind might sound difficult, so we'll go through them one by one.

Raise the knee

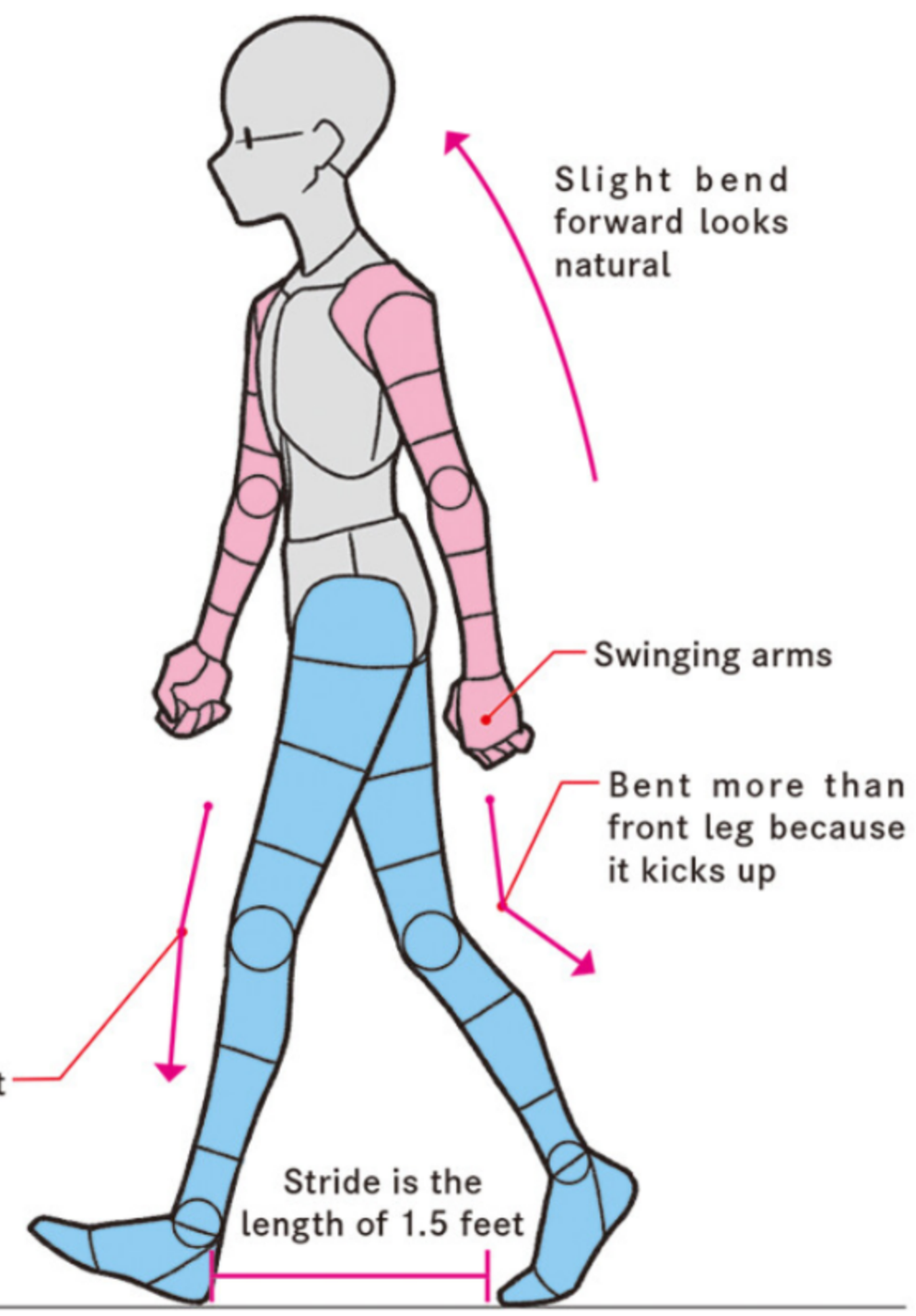
Knees bend slightly when walking to absorb shock. If they are completely stretched out, the character can look tense or like they are deliberately striking a pose, which can seem unnatural.



At Different Angles

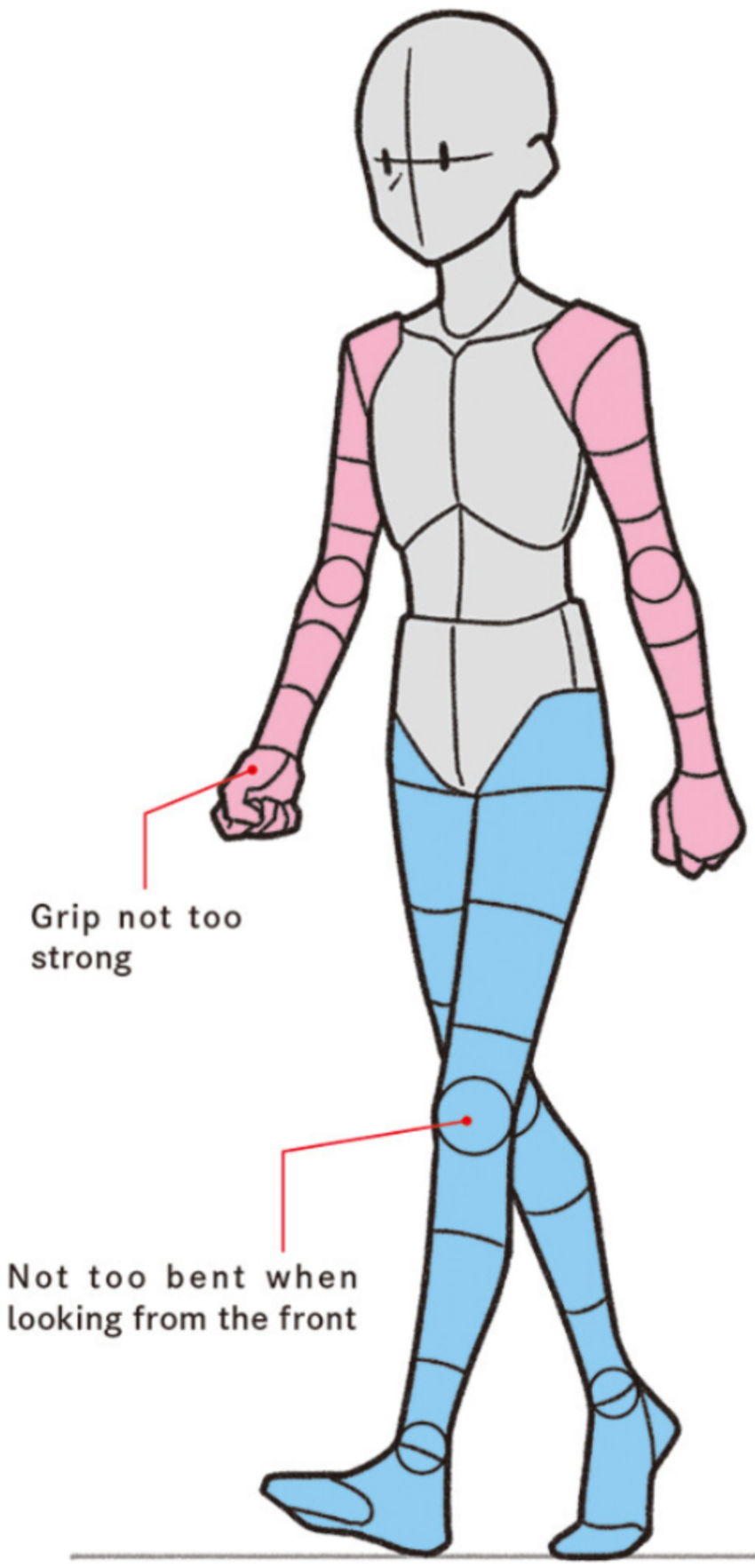


Front



Side

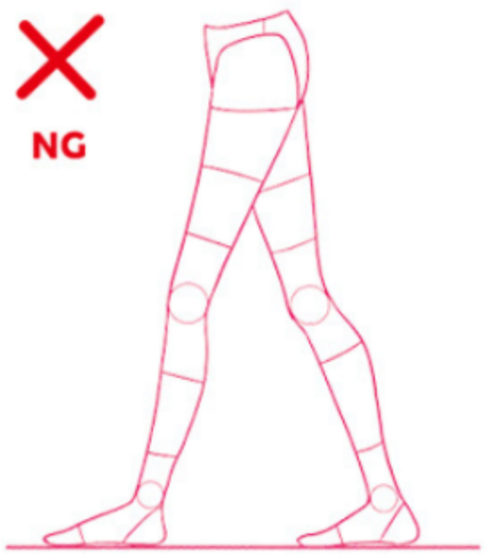
Pose Focus



Angled

Never have both feet on the ground

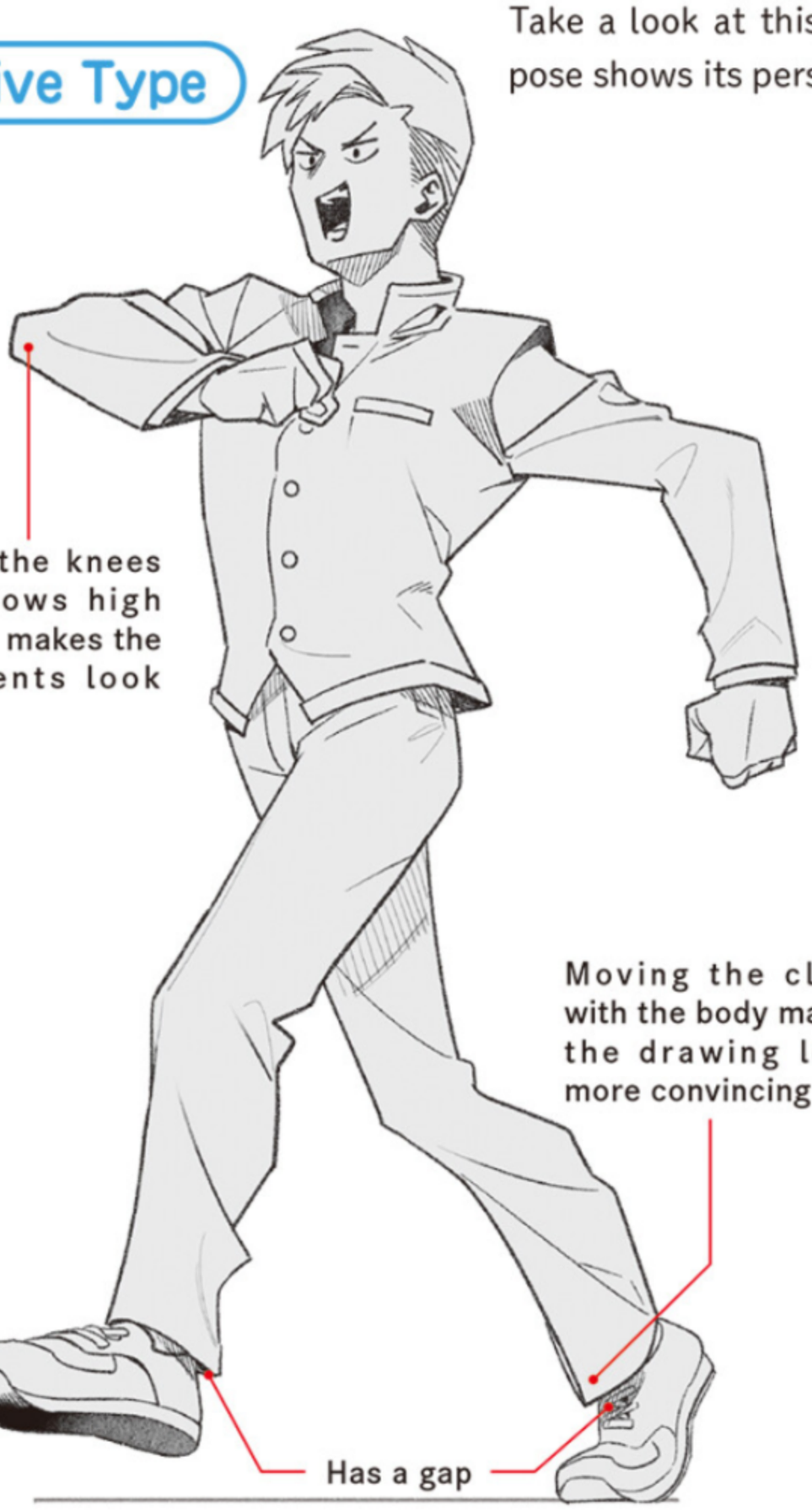
You never have both feet completely on the ground when walking!



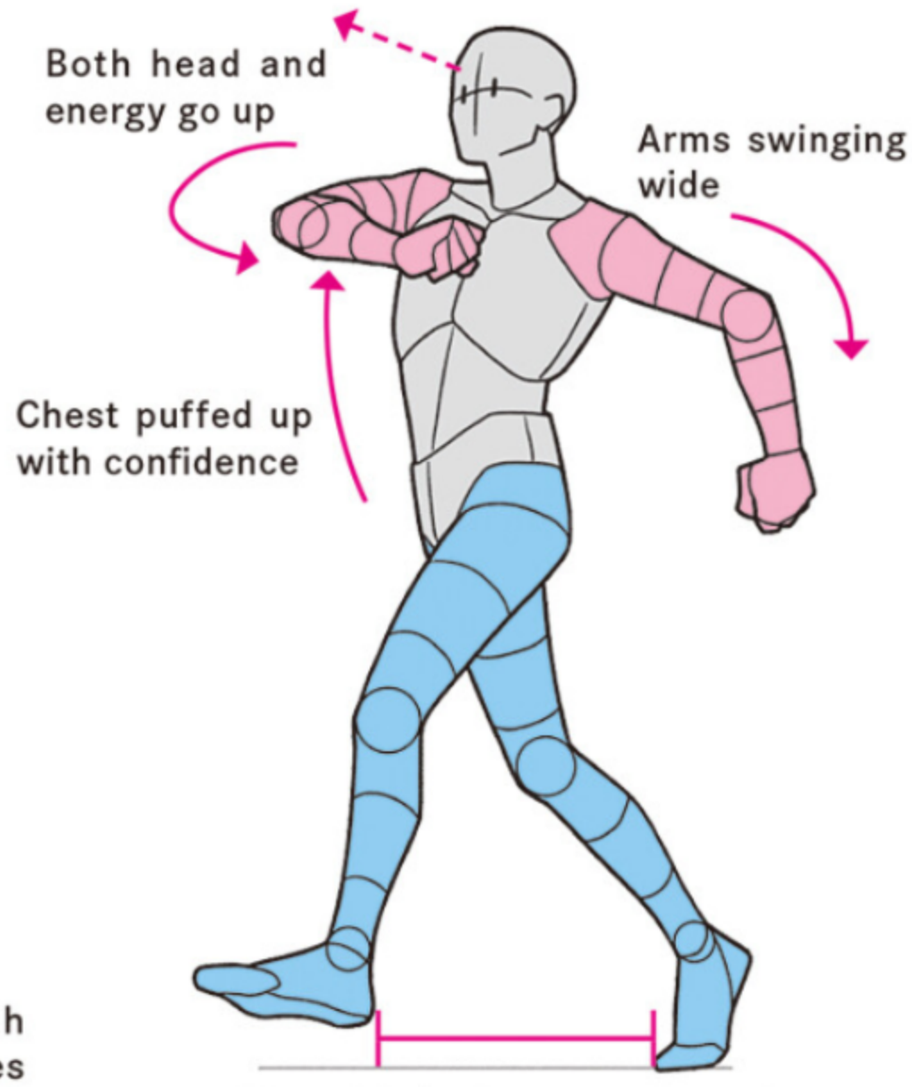
Male and Female Pose Differences

Active Type

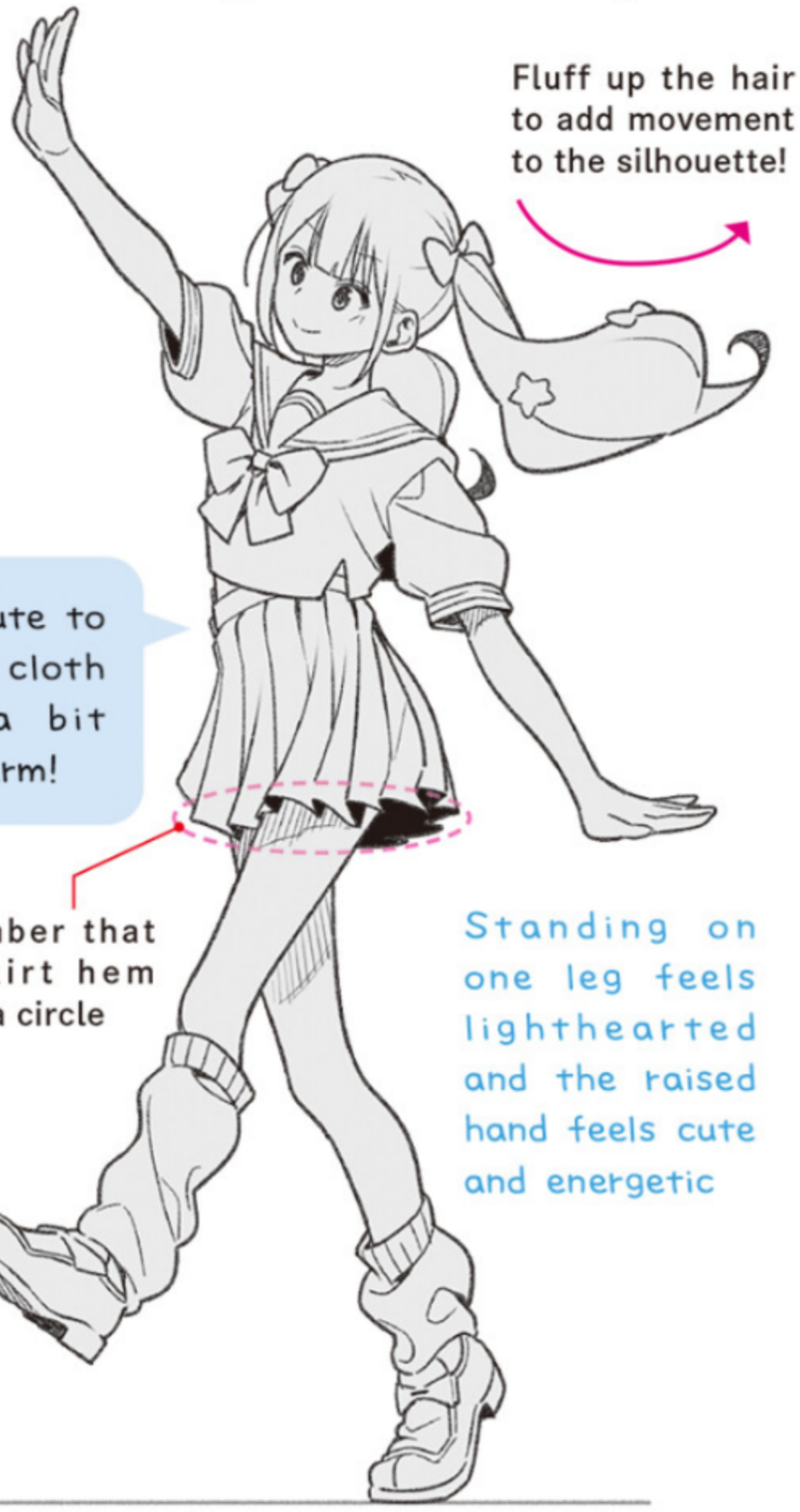
Take a look at this pose from different personalities. The walking pose shows its personality mainly from how the arms and feet move.

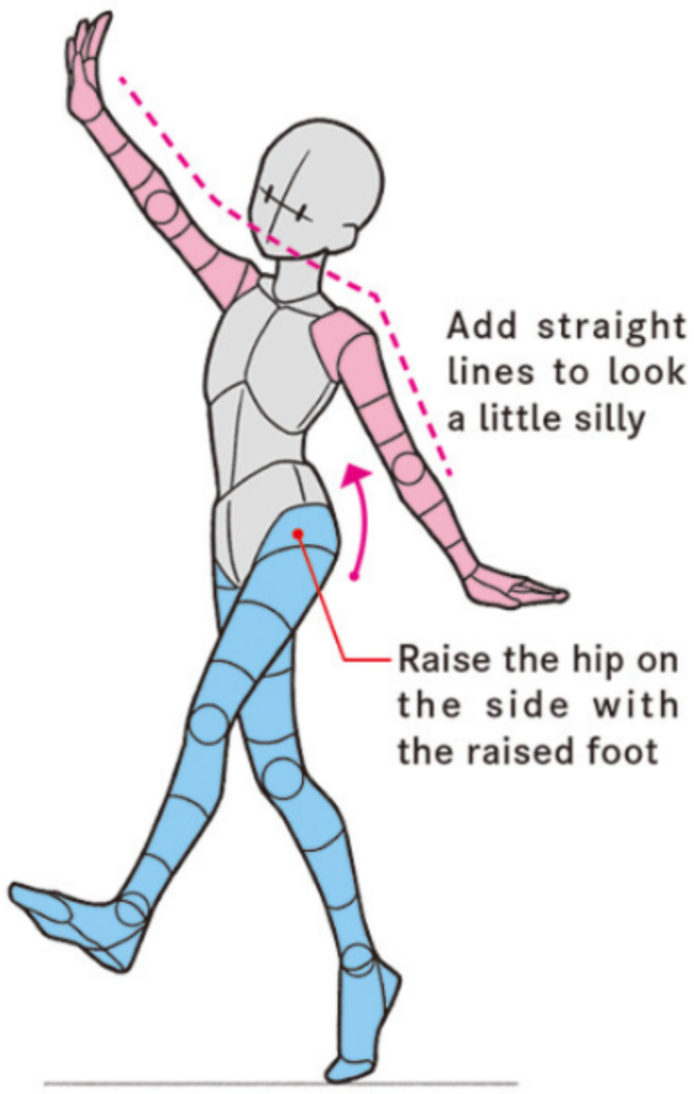


Big arm swing and leg stride to show active personality



Big stride looks more energetic

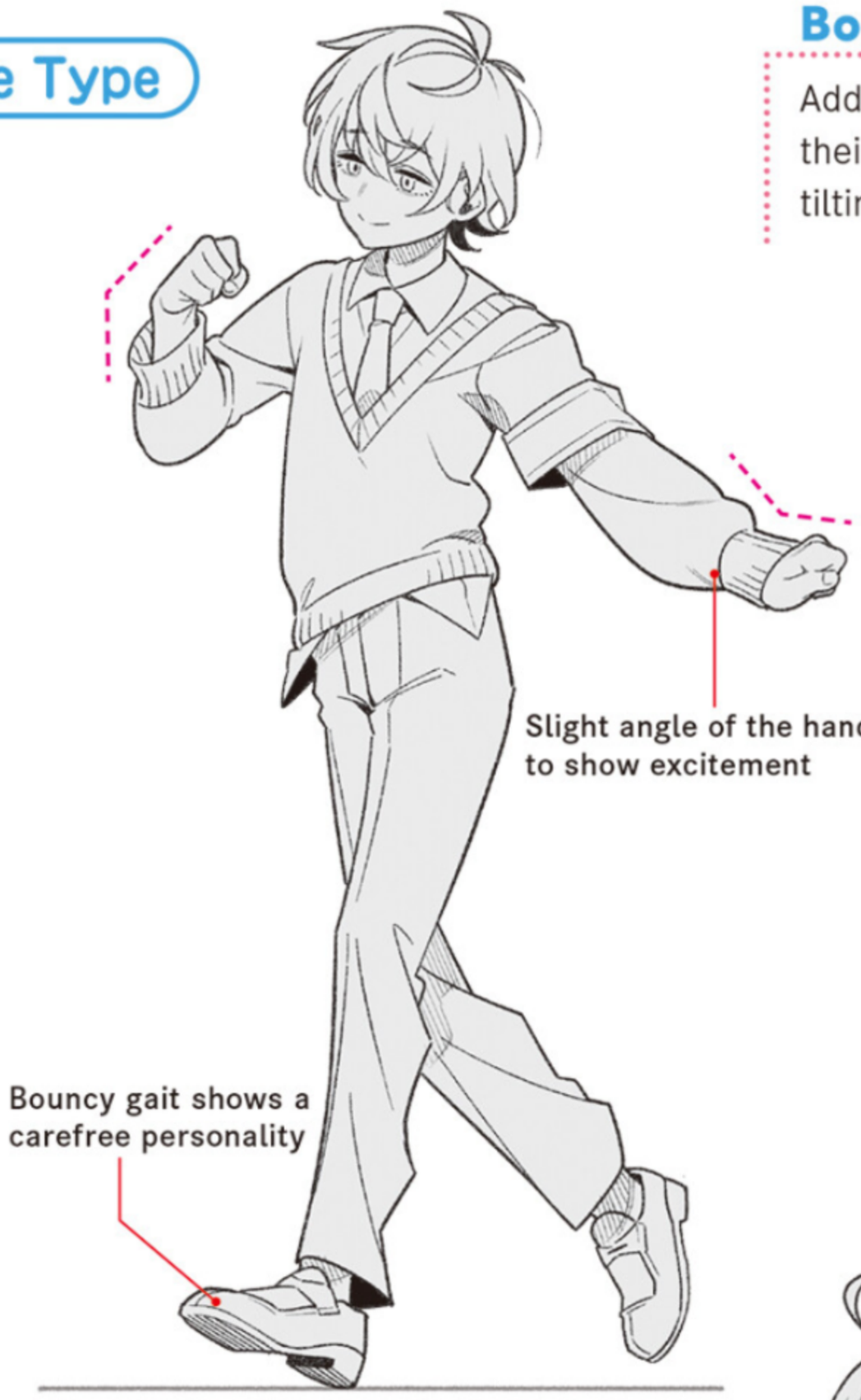




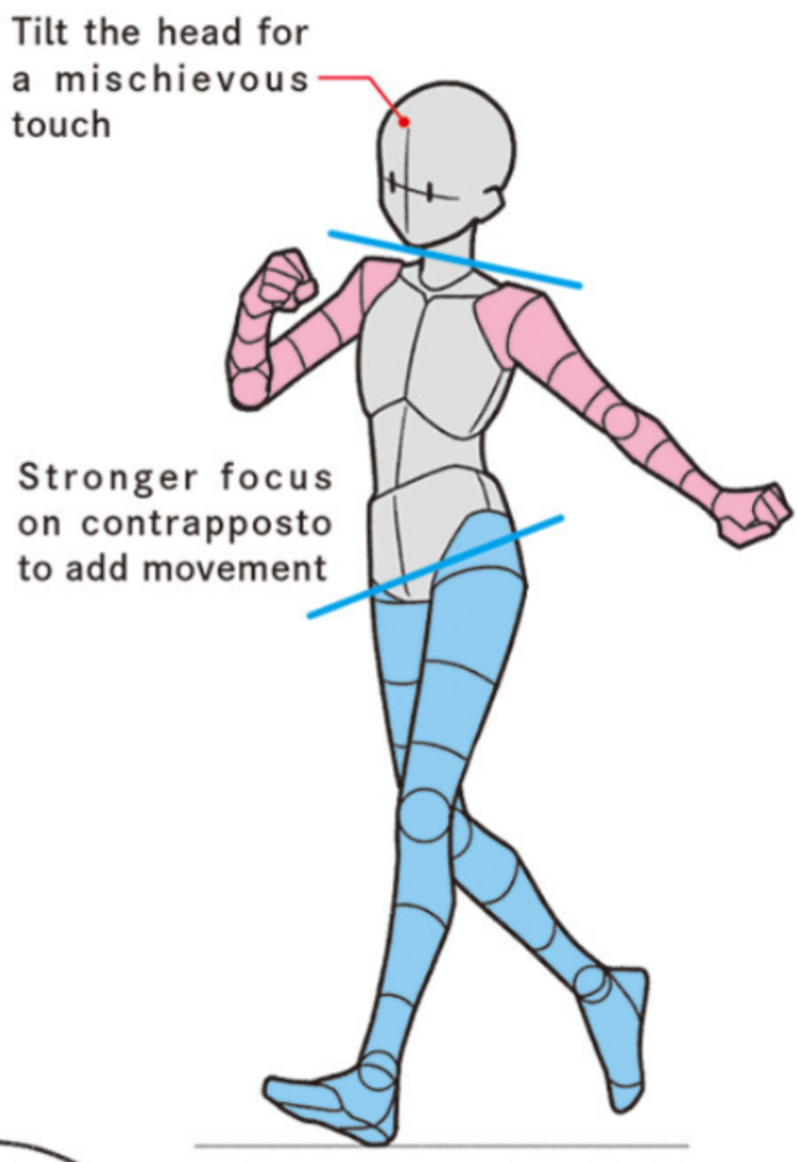
Cute Type

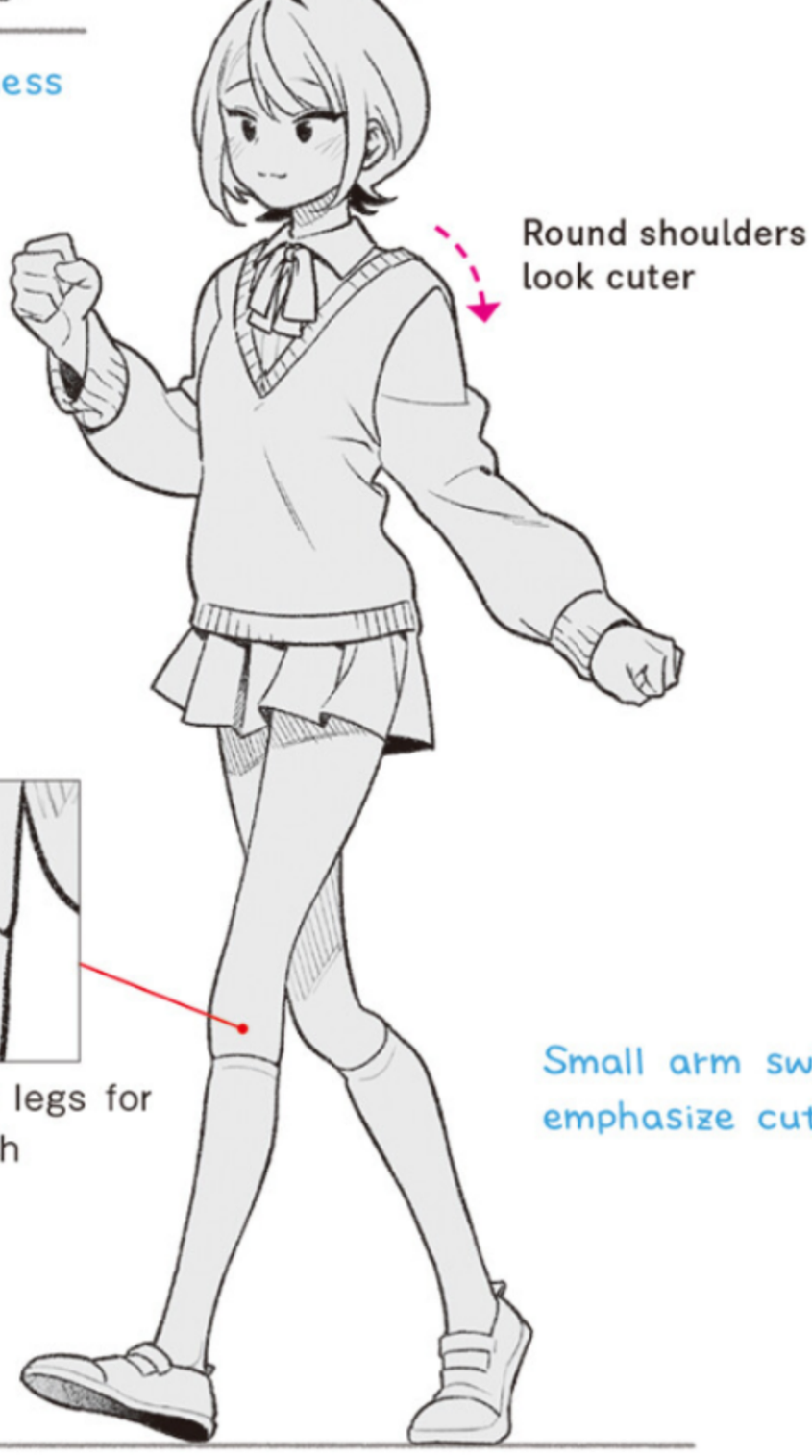
Boyish cuteness

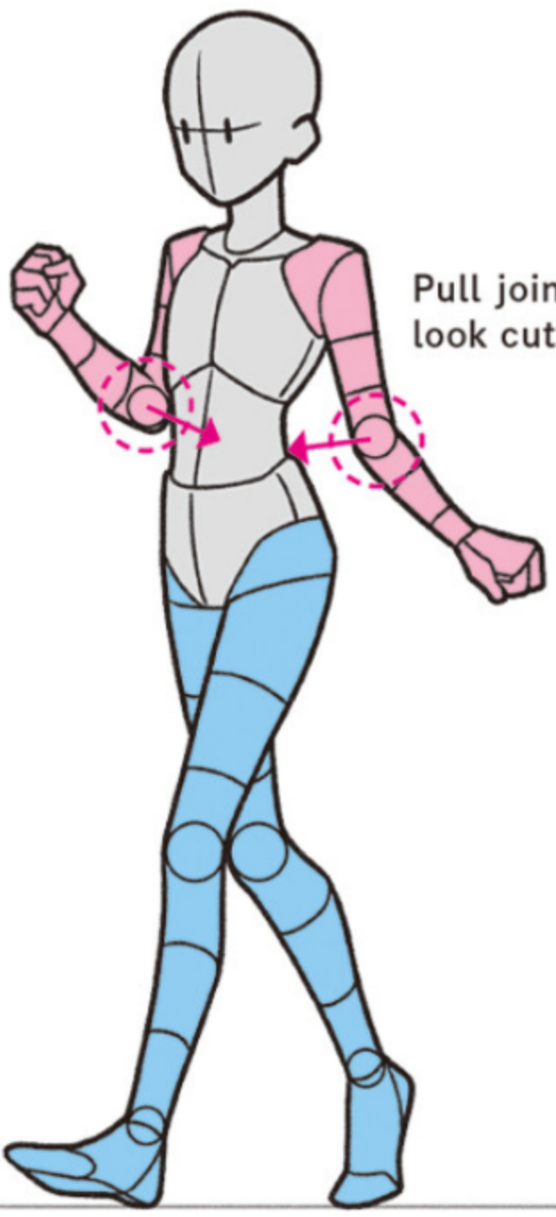
Add cute elements to male characters to show their boyishness. Bending the wrist inward and tilting the head can add cuteness.



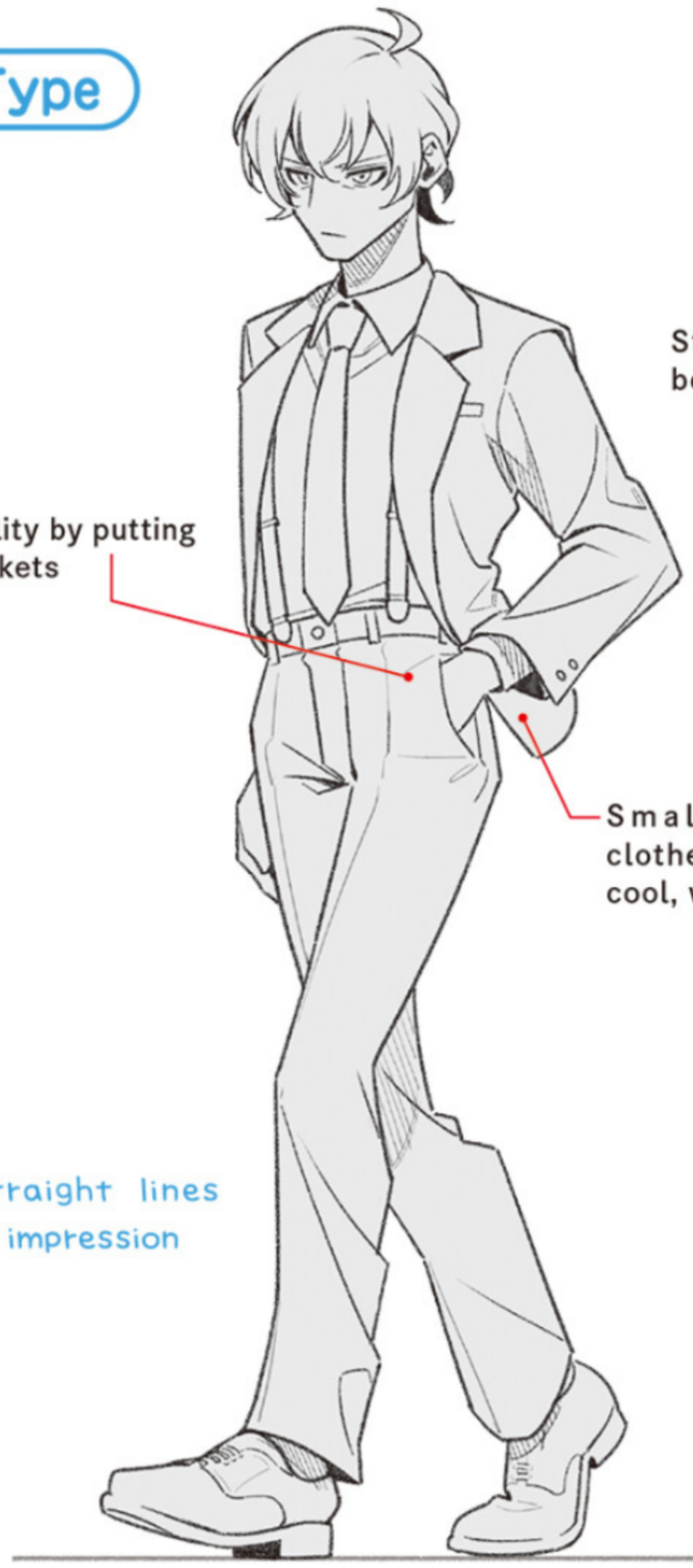
Skipping pose shows lightheartedness







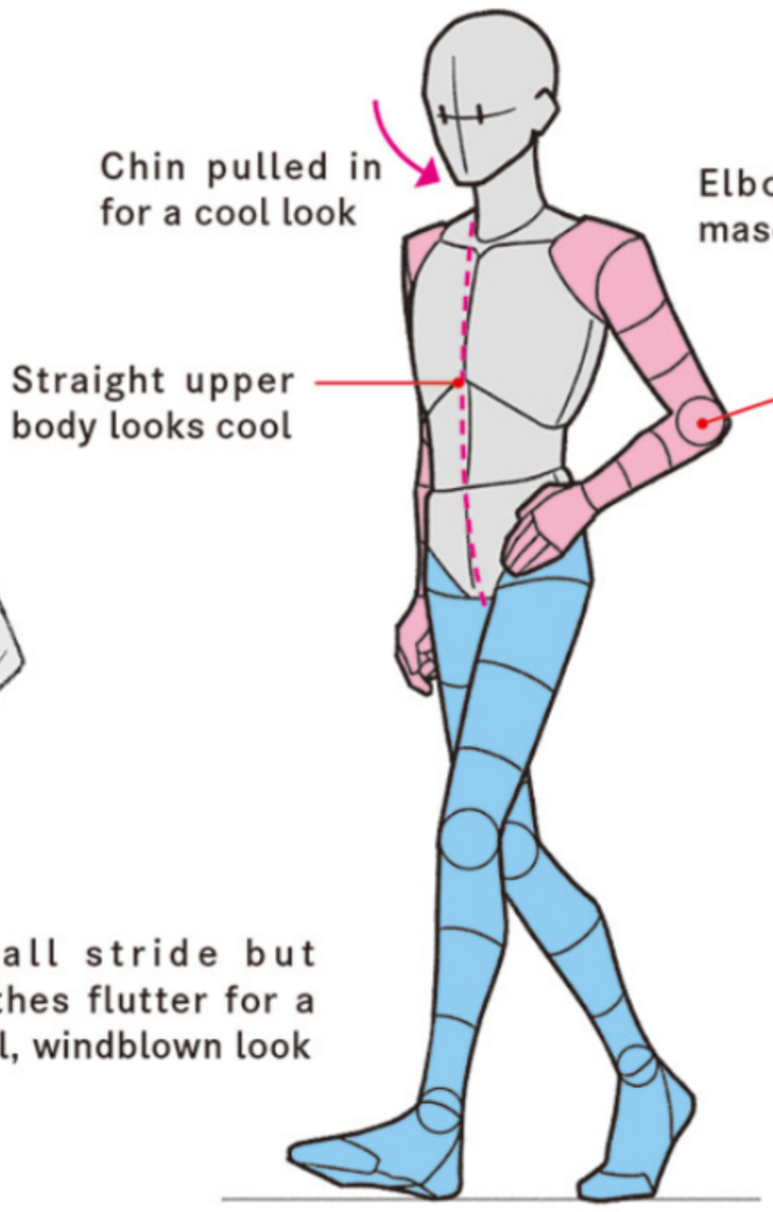
Cool Type



Add personality by putting hands in pockets

Small stride but clothes flutter for a cool, windblown look

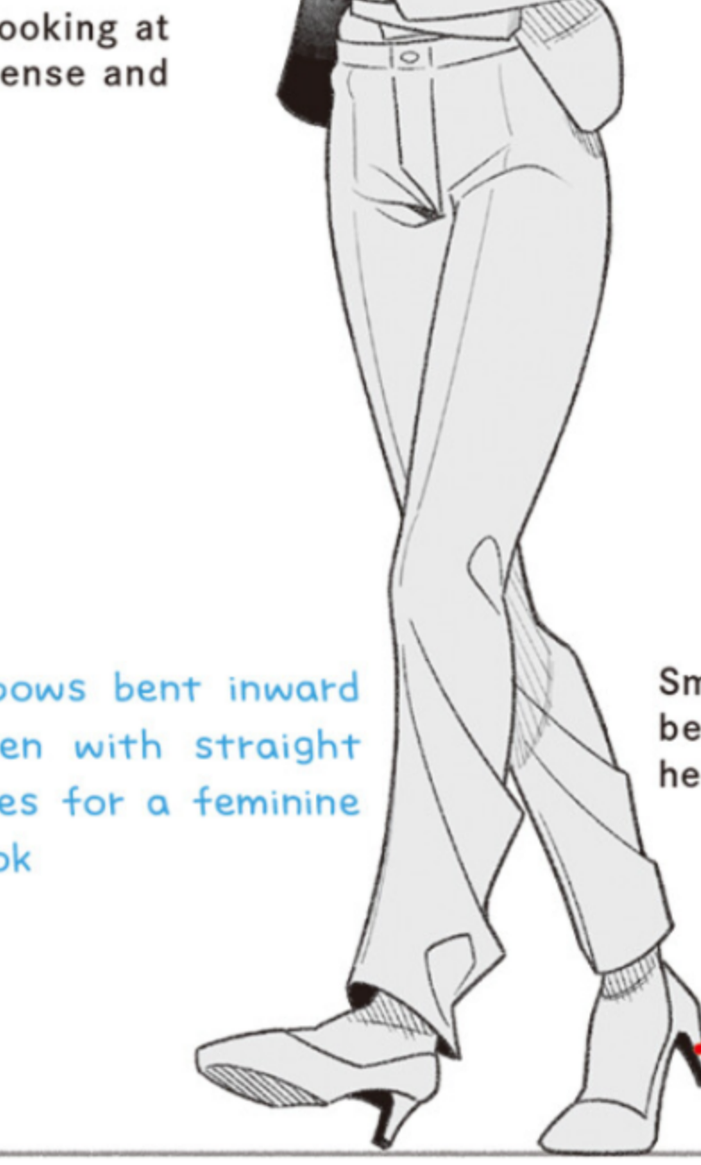
Vertical straight lines give a cool impression



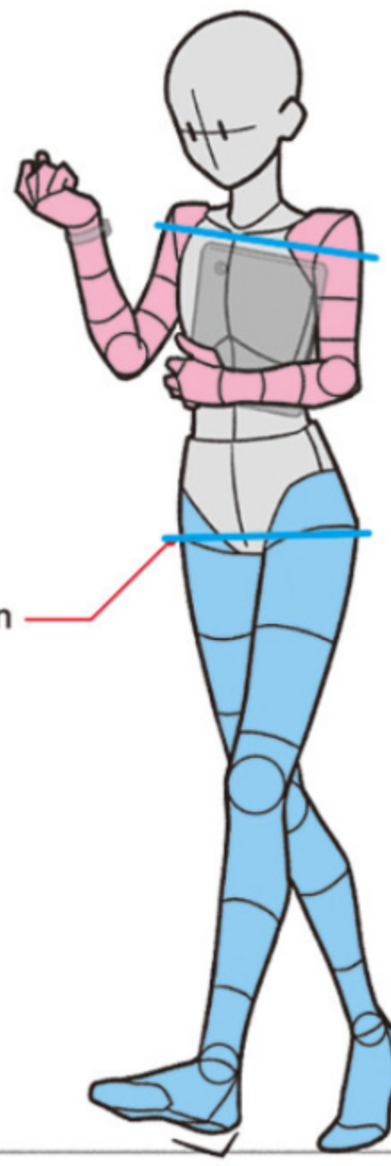
Chin pulled in for a cool look

Elbows out for a masculine feel

Straight upper body looks cool

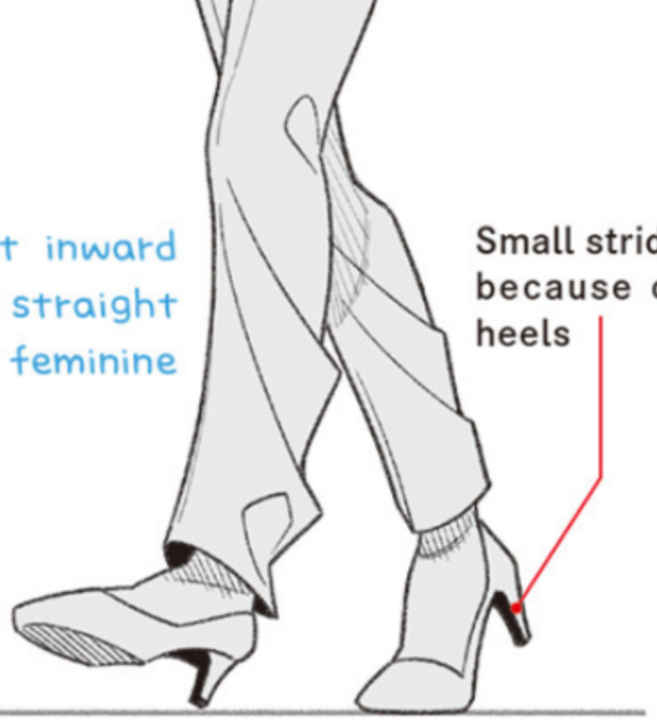


Walking while looking at a watch feels tense and hurried



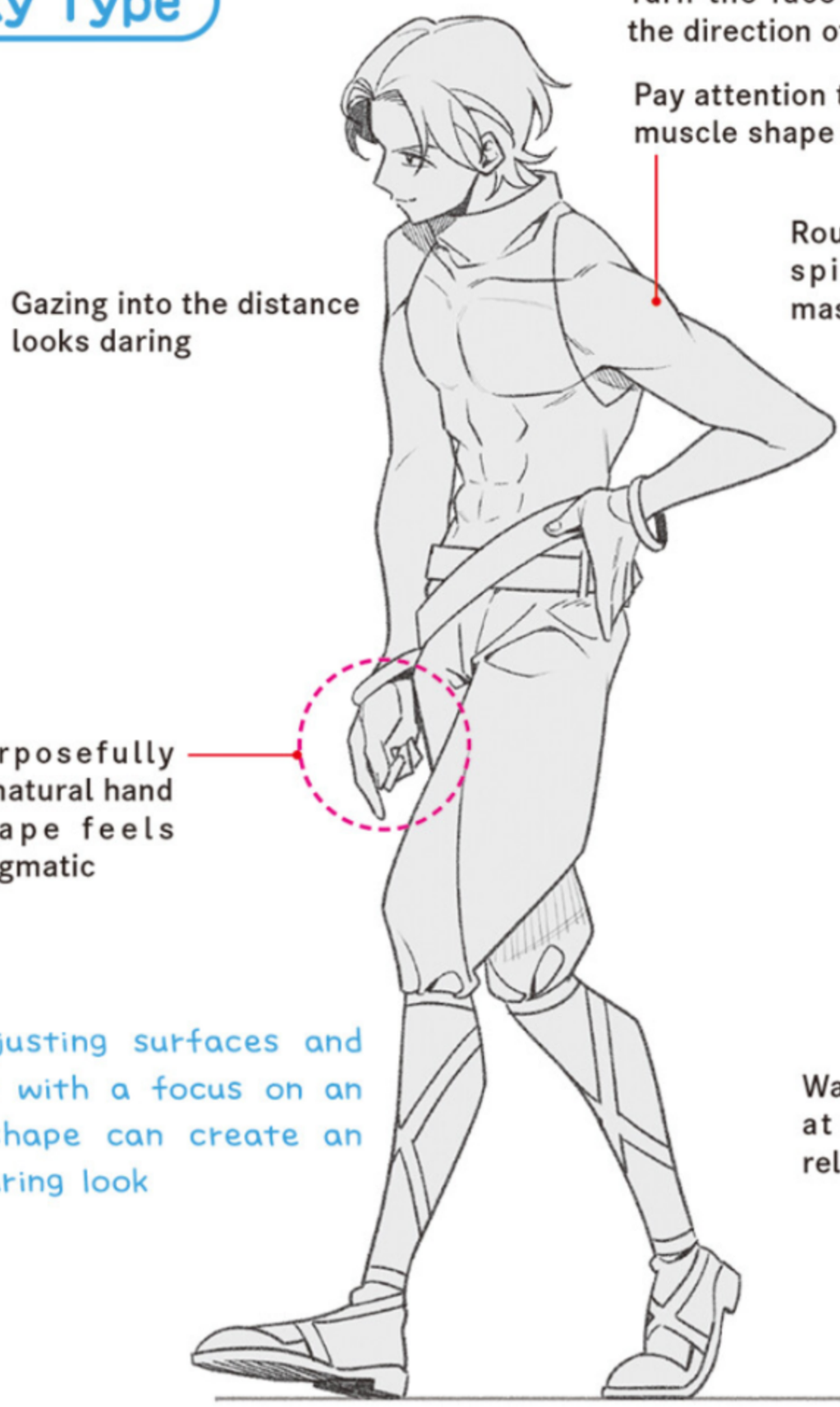
Less focus on contrapposto

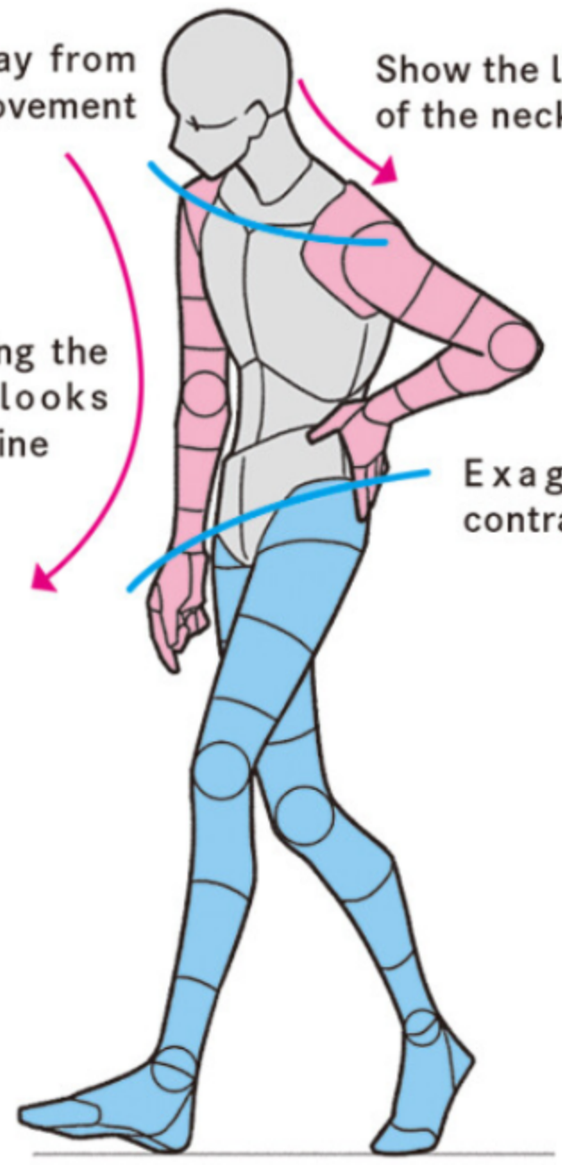
Elbows bent inward even with straight lines for a feminine look

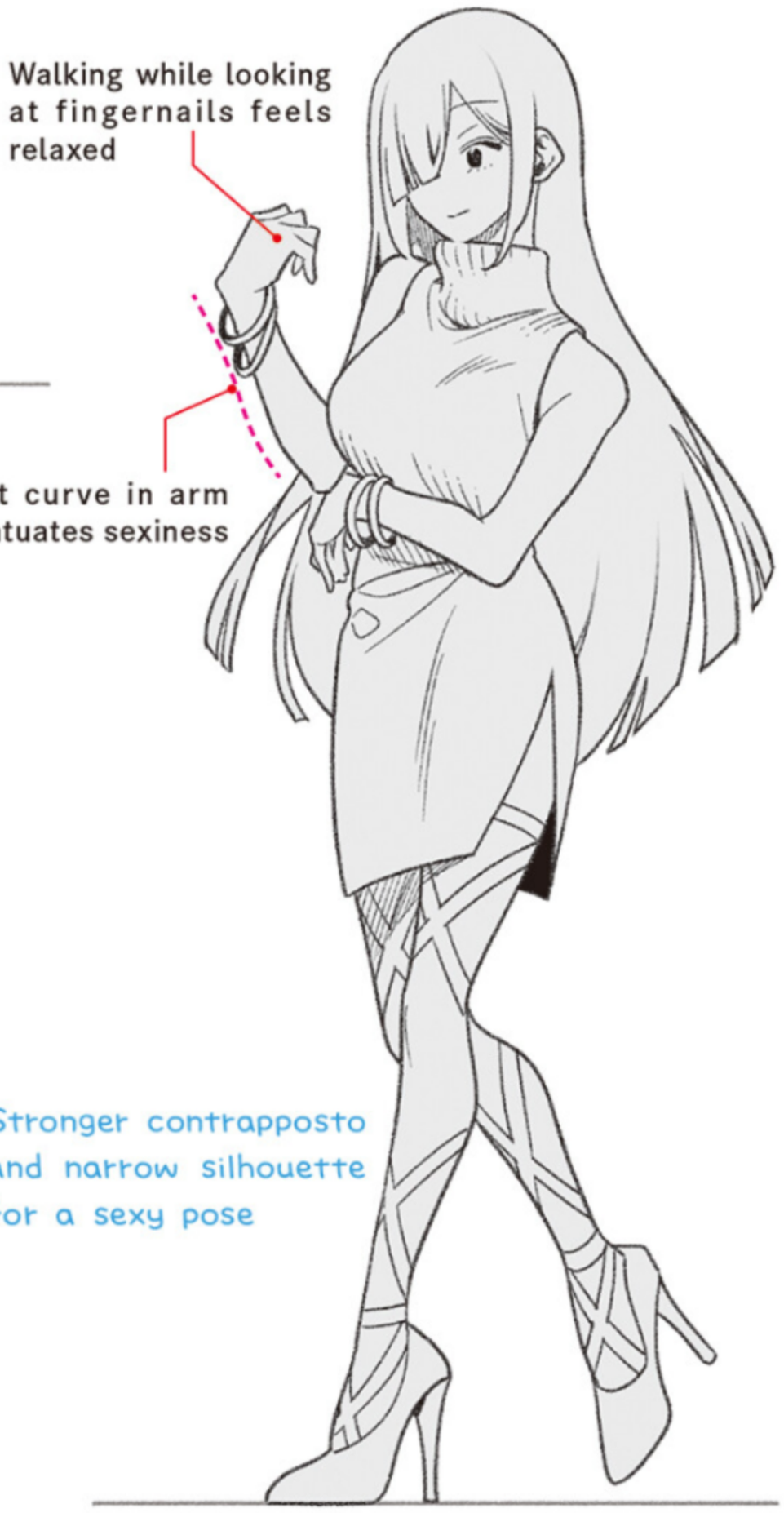


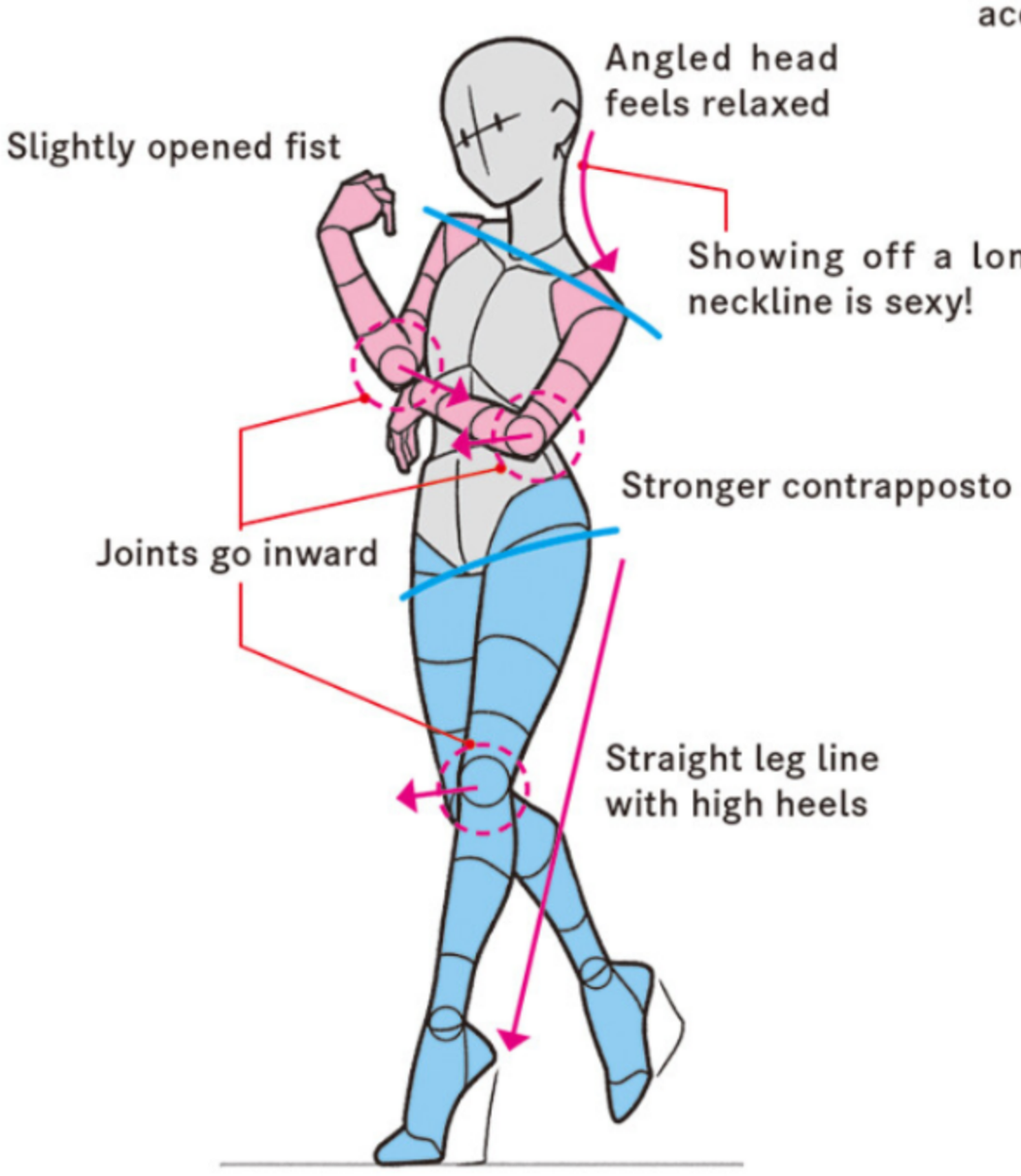
Small stride because of heels

Sexy Type


Gazing into the distance looks daring
Purposefully unnatural hand shape feels enigmatic
Adjusting surfaces and tilt with a focus on an S-shape can create an alluring look


Turn the face away from the direction of movement
Show the line of the neck
Pay attention to muscle shape
Rounding the spine looks masculine
Exaggerate contrapposto!


Walking while looking at fingernails feels relaxed
Slight curve in arm accentuates sexiness


Slightly opened fist
Angled head feels relaxed
Showing off a long neckline is sexy!
Stronger contrapposto
Joints go inward
Straight leg line with high heels

Stronger contrapposto and narrow silhouette for a sexy pose

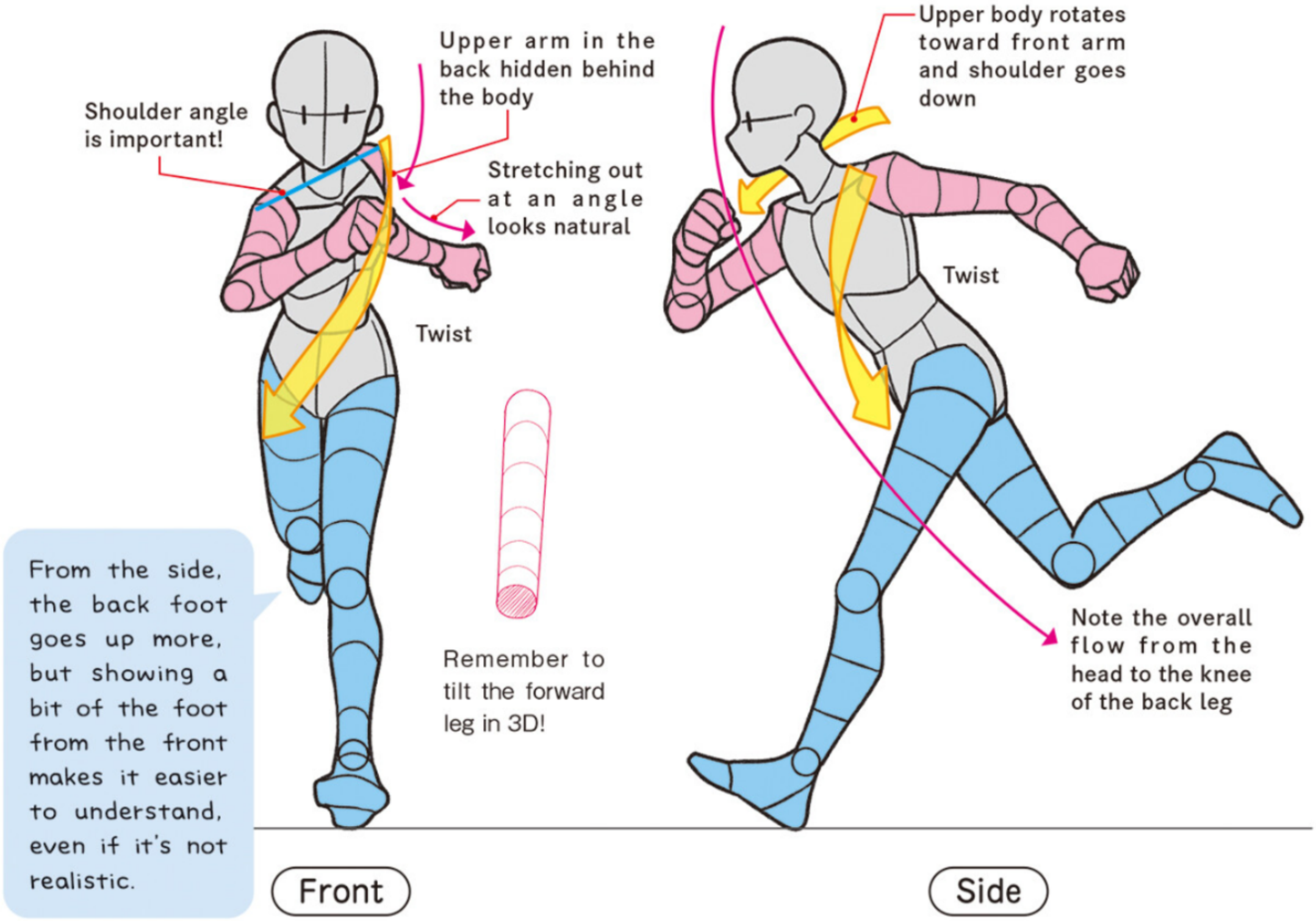
Run

When running, the tilt of the upper body can express differences in speed. Stronger tilts look faster, and how the arms swing and the feet are positioned can also change the impression of the pose. Keep in mind that a large arm swing will add tilt to the upper body.

Focus on the Upper Body Angle!

The upper and lower body face opposite directions when running. Draw the body's angles well to depict running! Note how the upper body turns left and right while the head faces forward. Pay attention to the parts of the body that turn and the ones that don't.

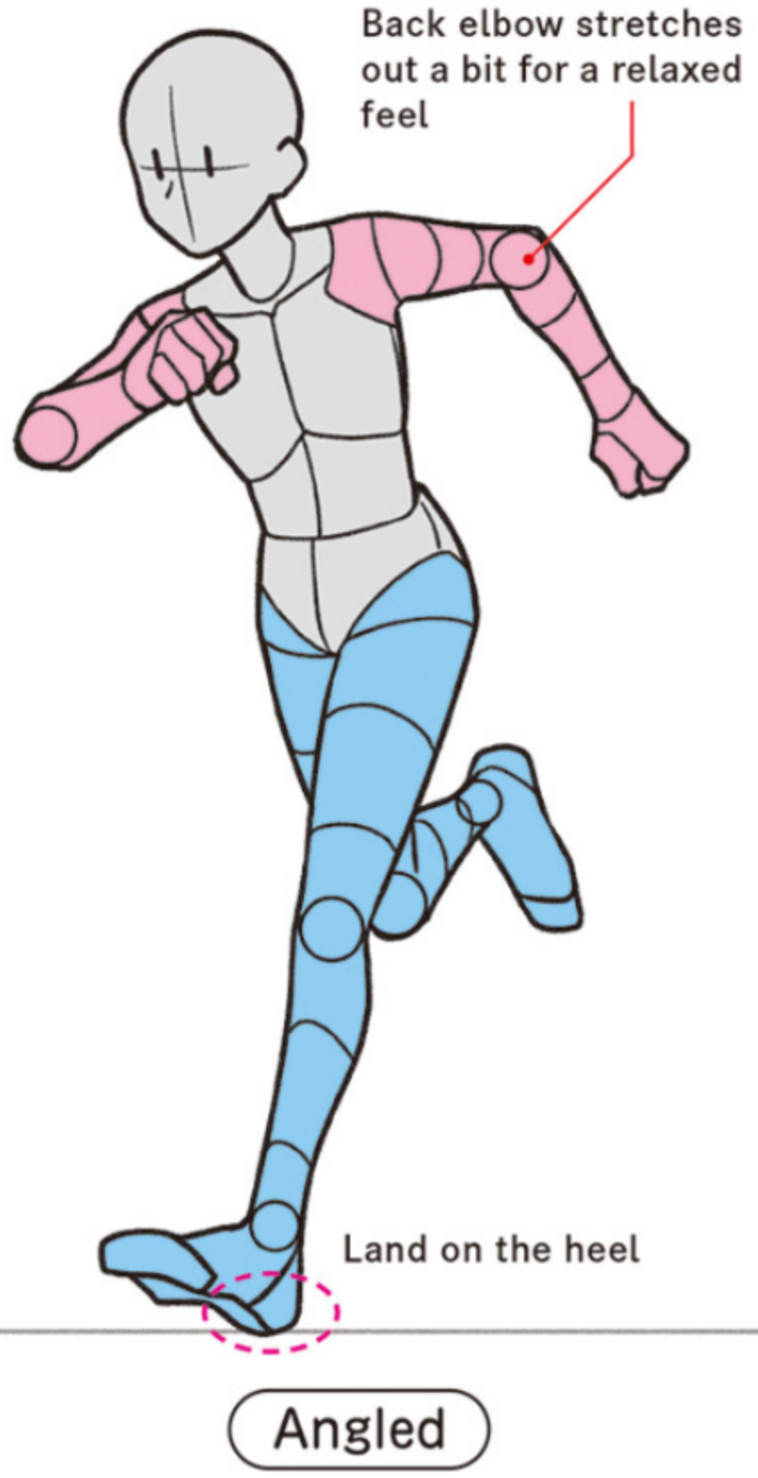
At Different Angles



Pose Focus

Things that sway

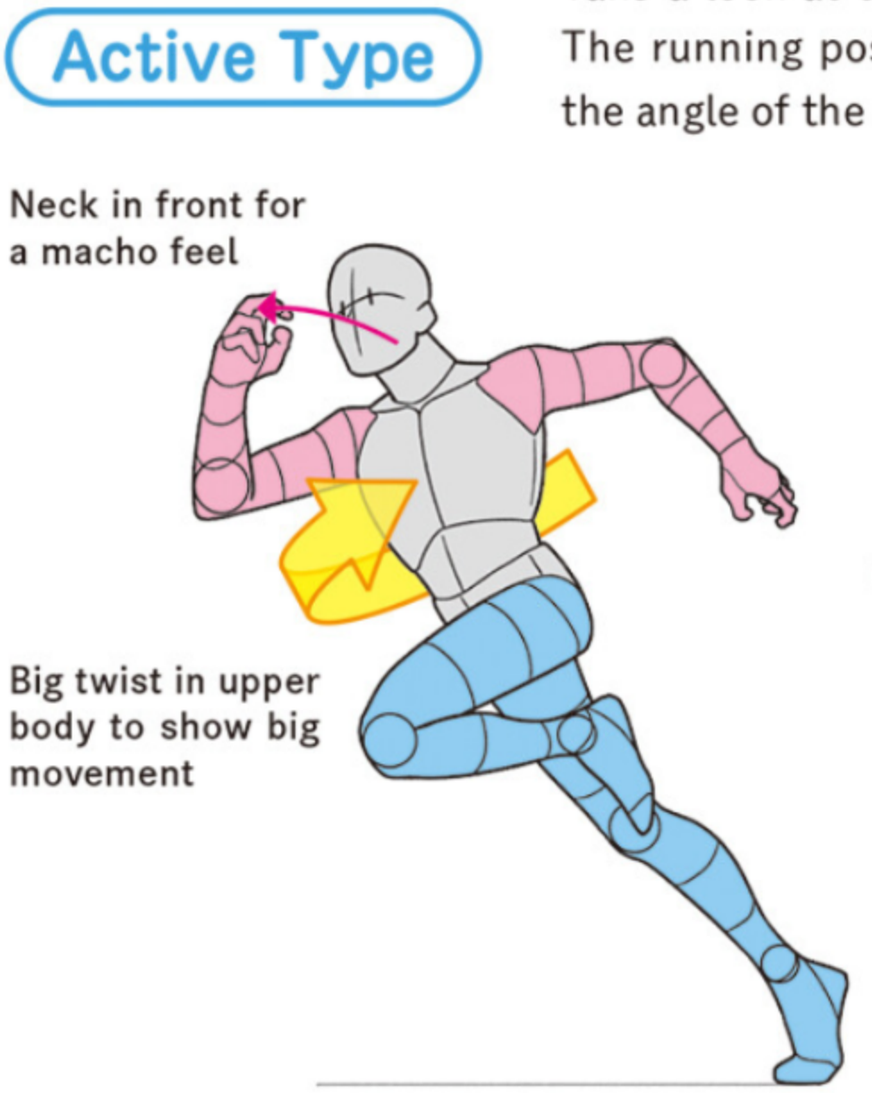
Let wind move hair, hems, sleeves, and other things that sway for a sense of speed!

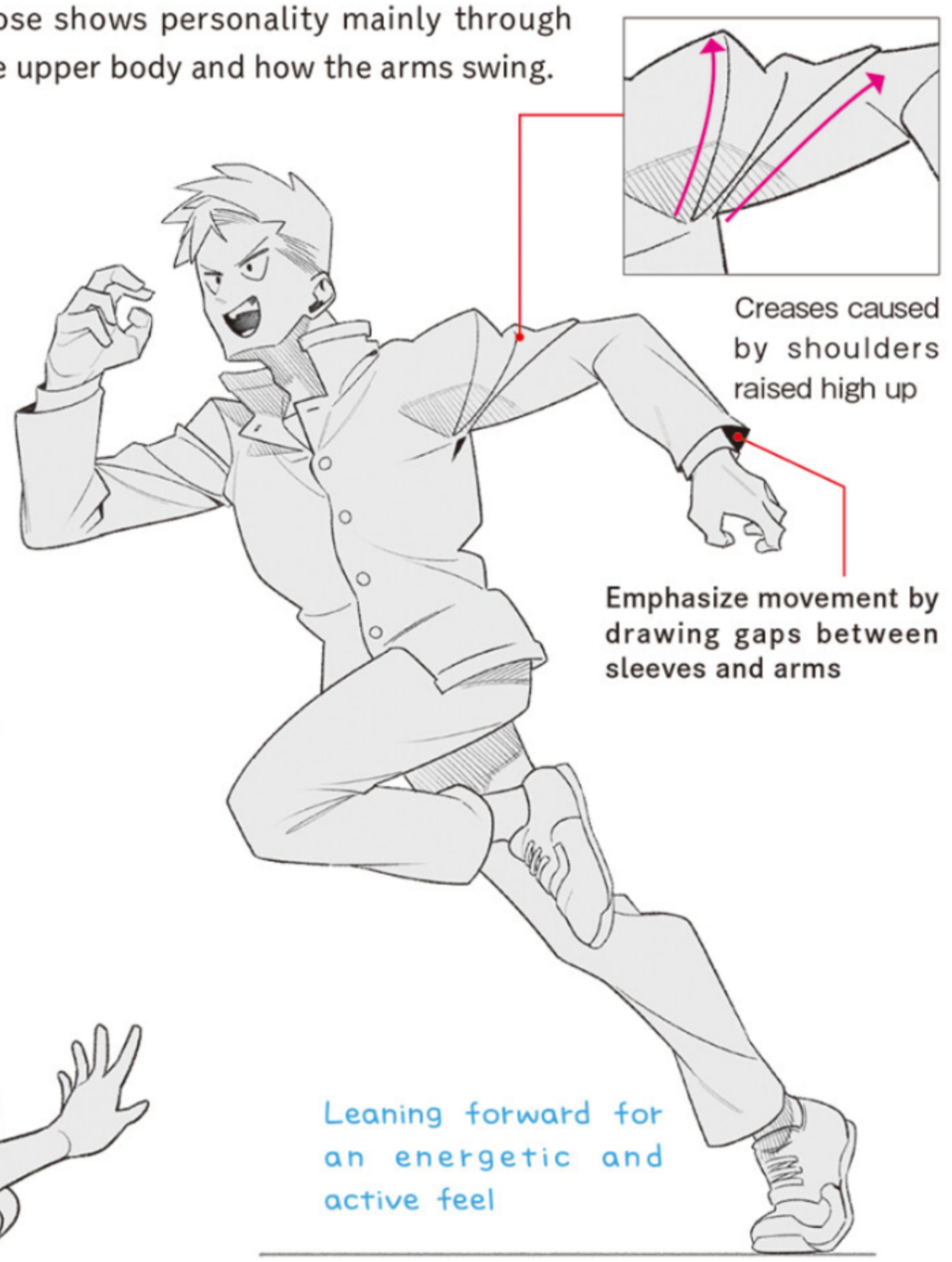


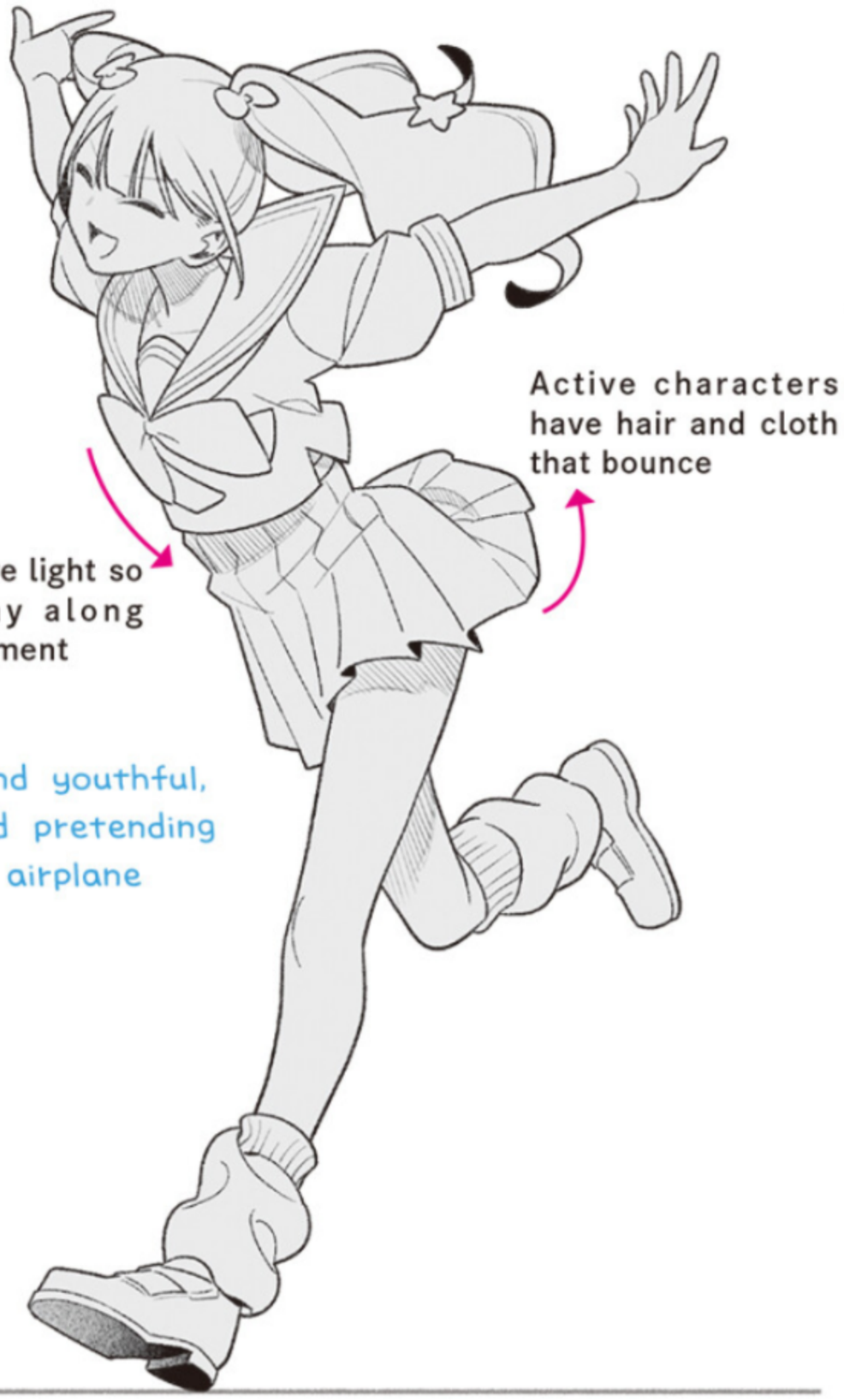
Male and Female Pose Differences

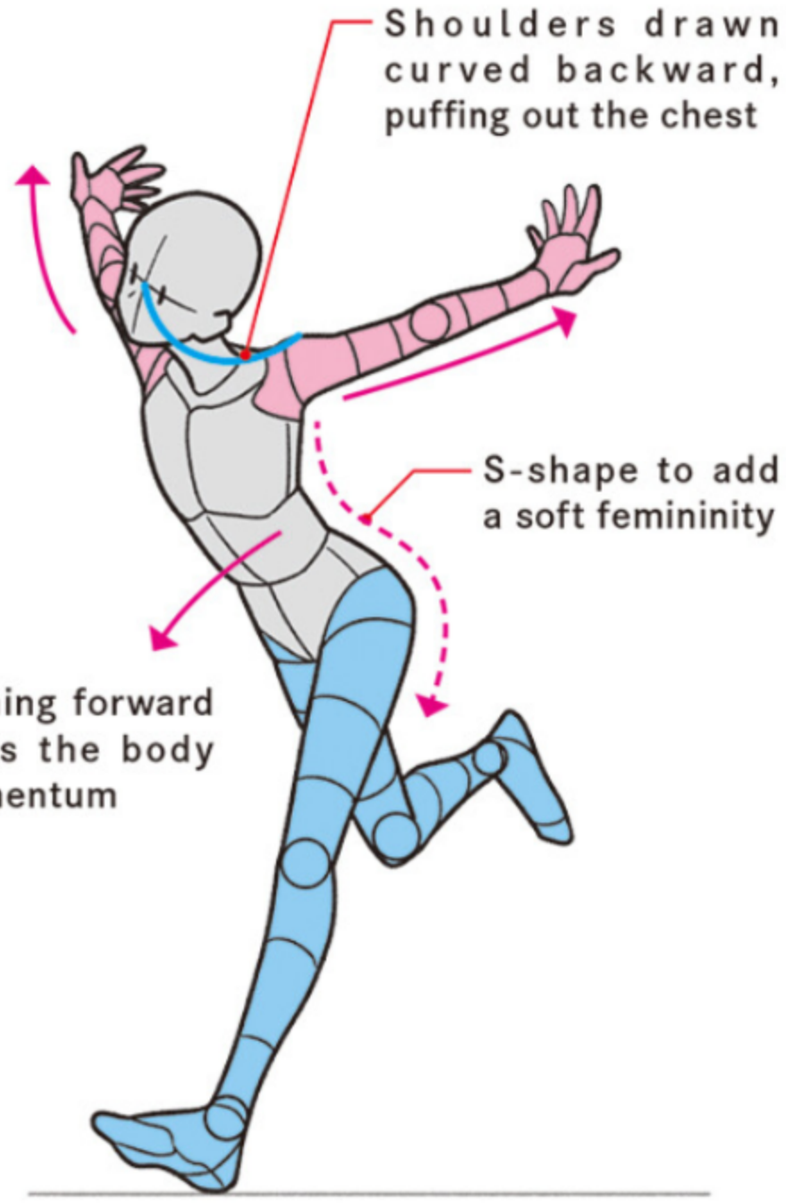
Active Type

Take a look at this pose from different personalities. The running pose shows personality mainly through the angle of the upper body and how the arms swing.



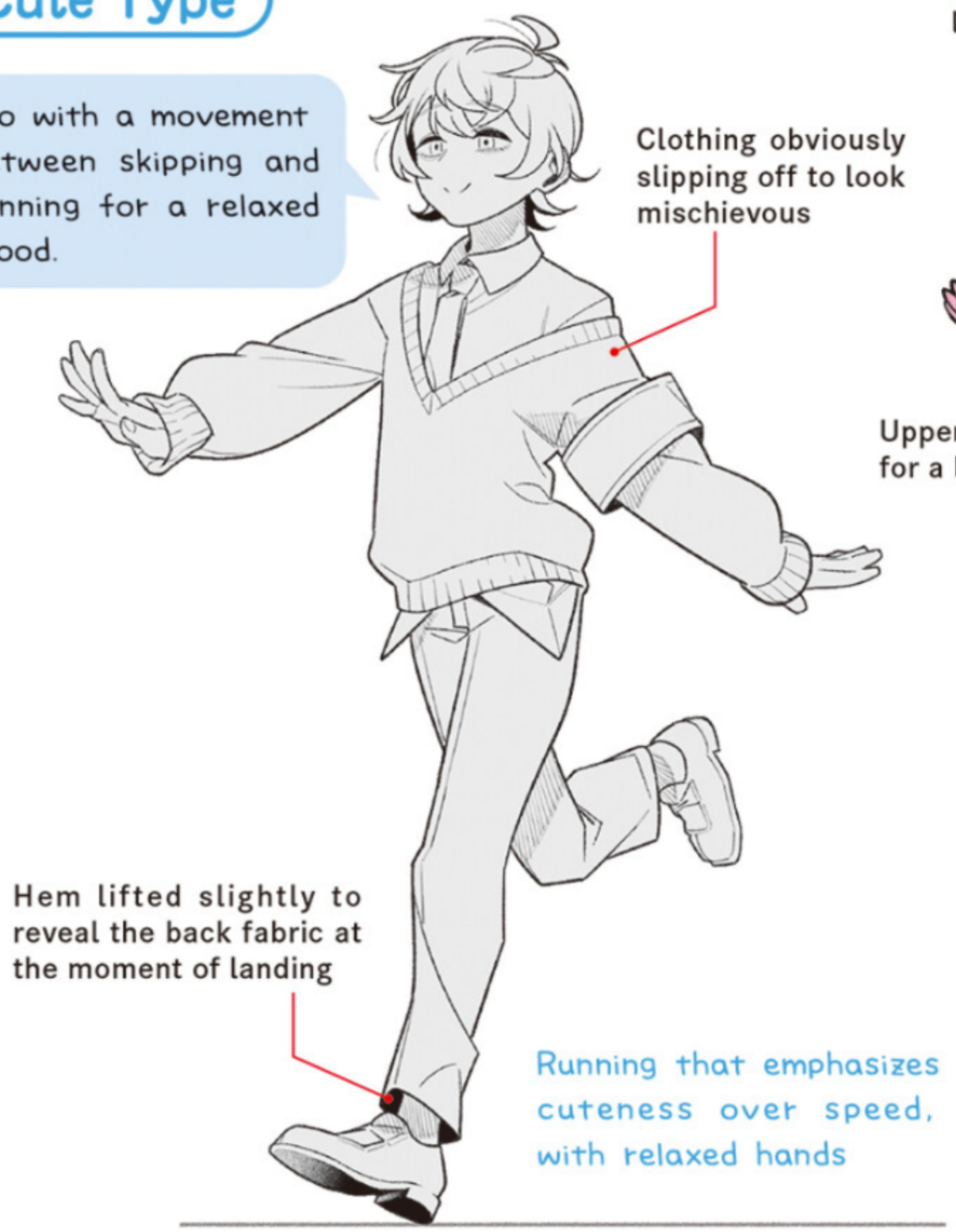


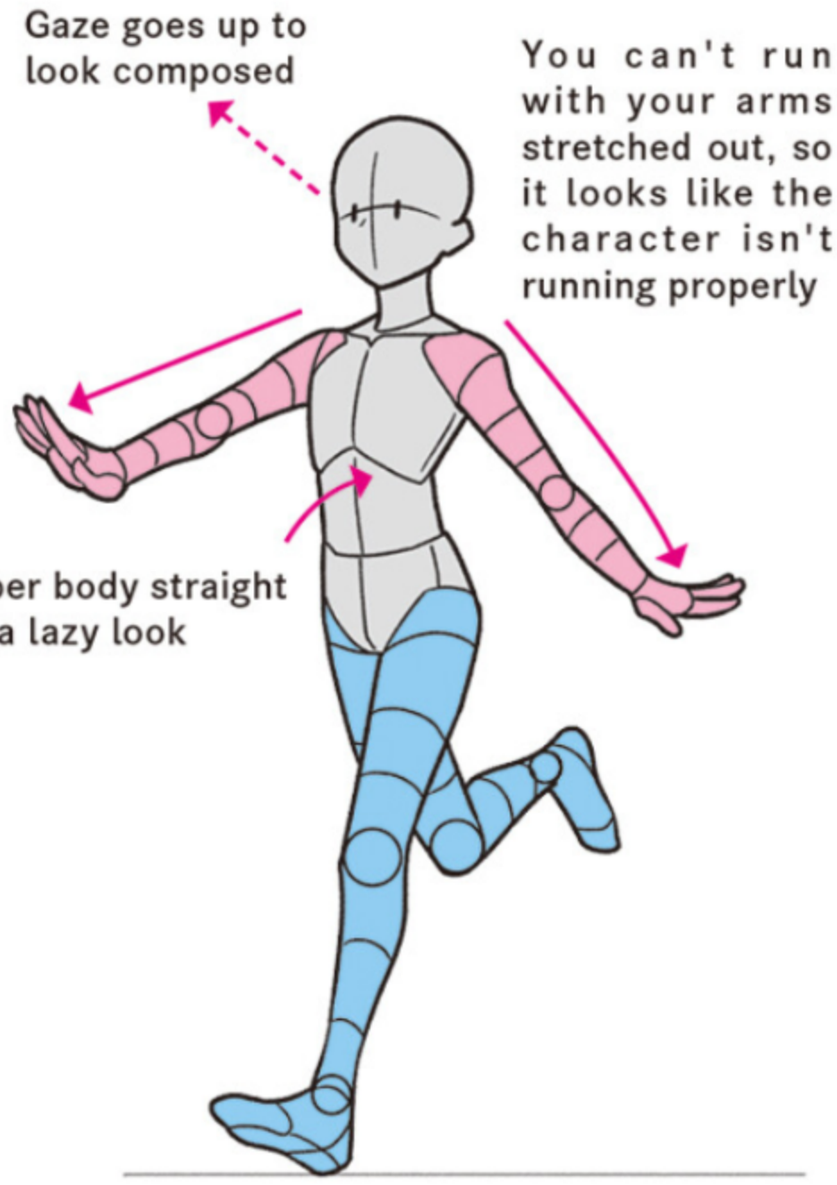


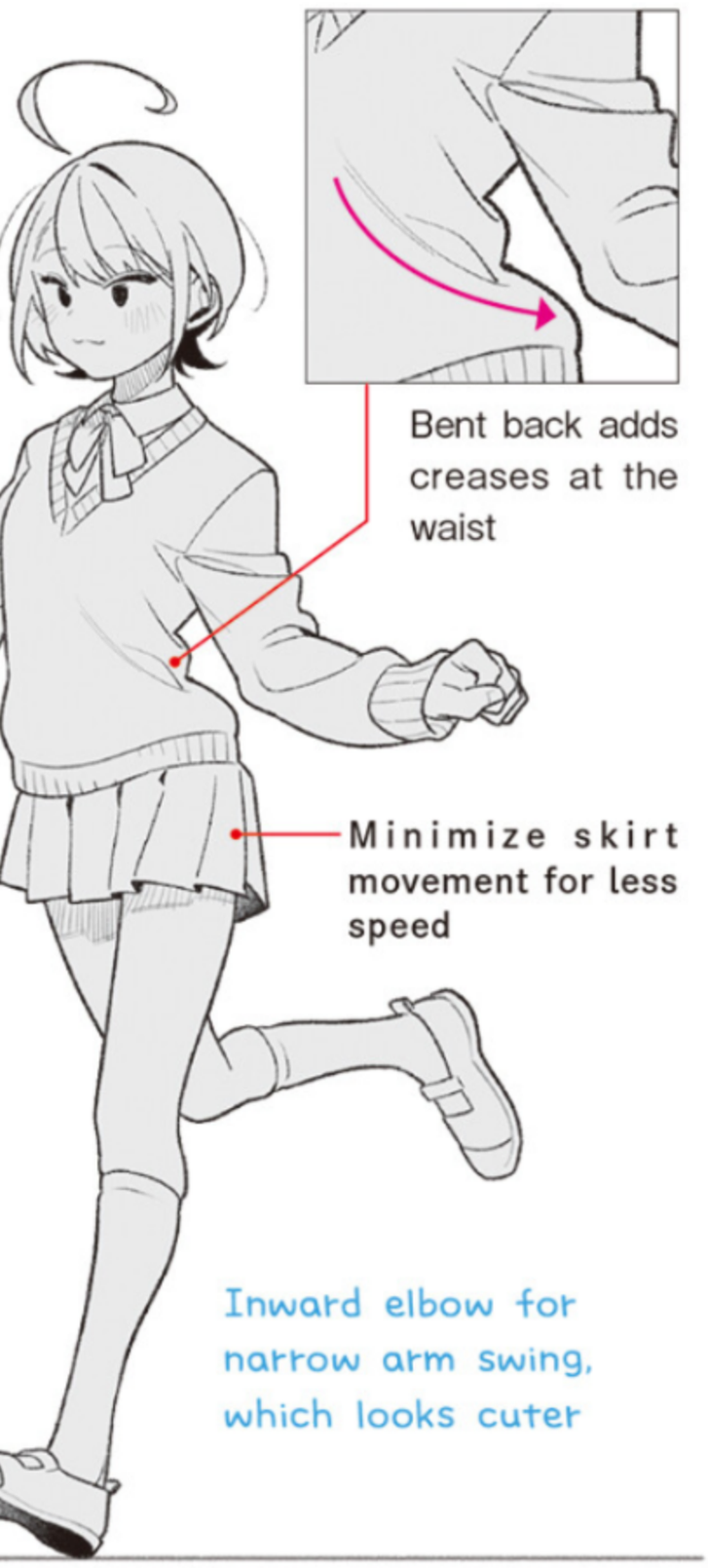


Cute Type

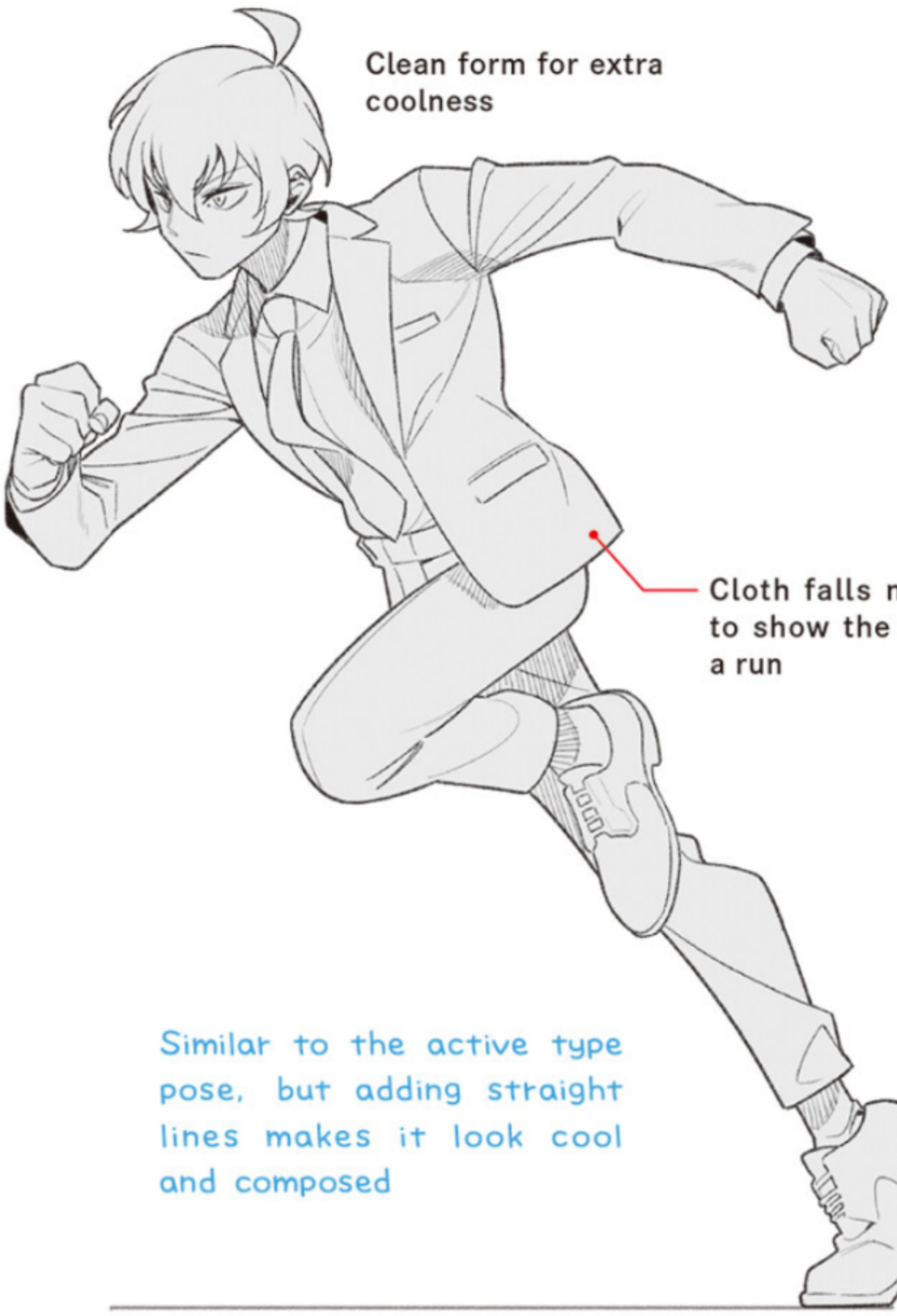
Go with a movement between skipping and running for a relaxed mood.



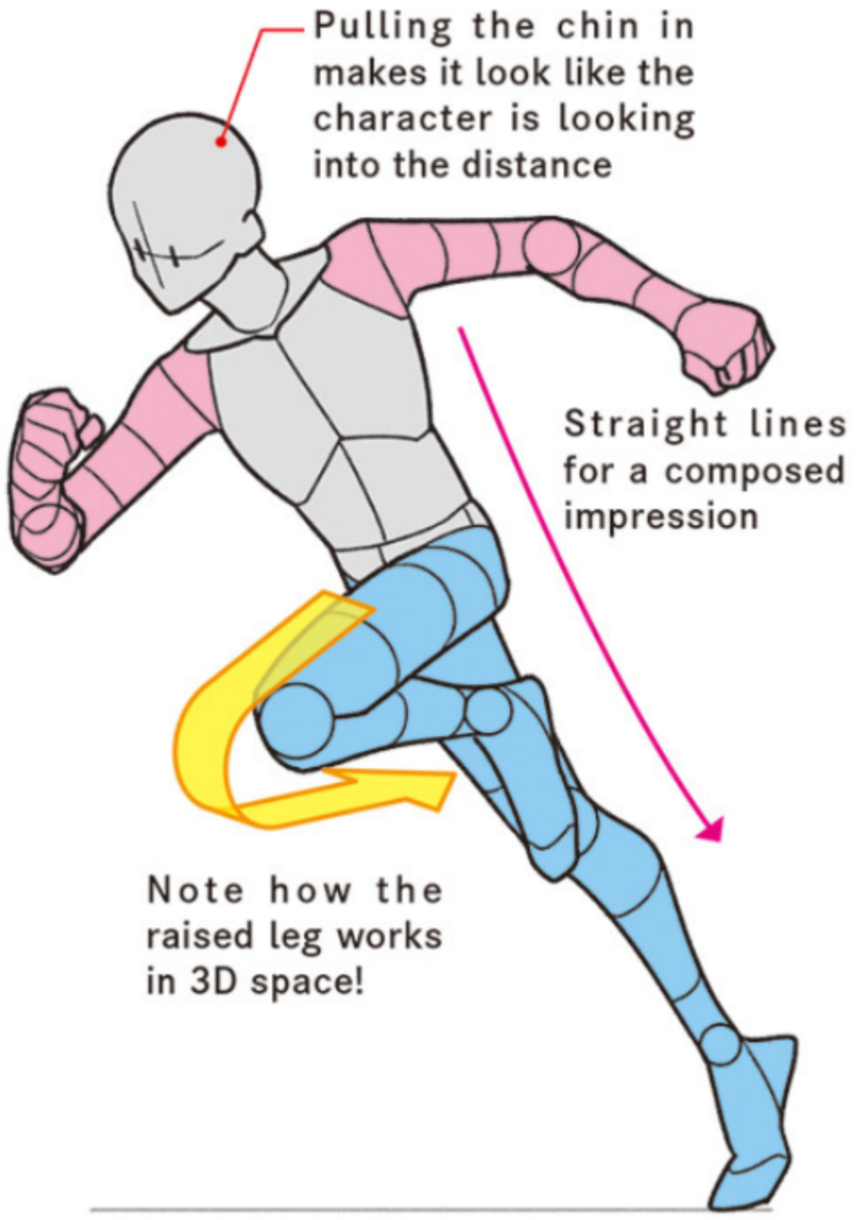




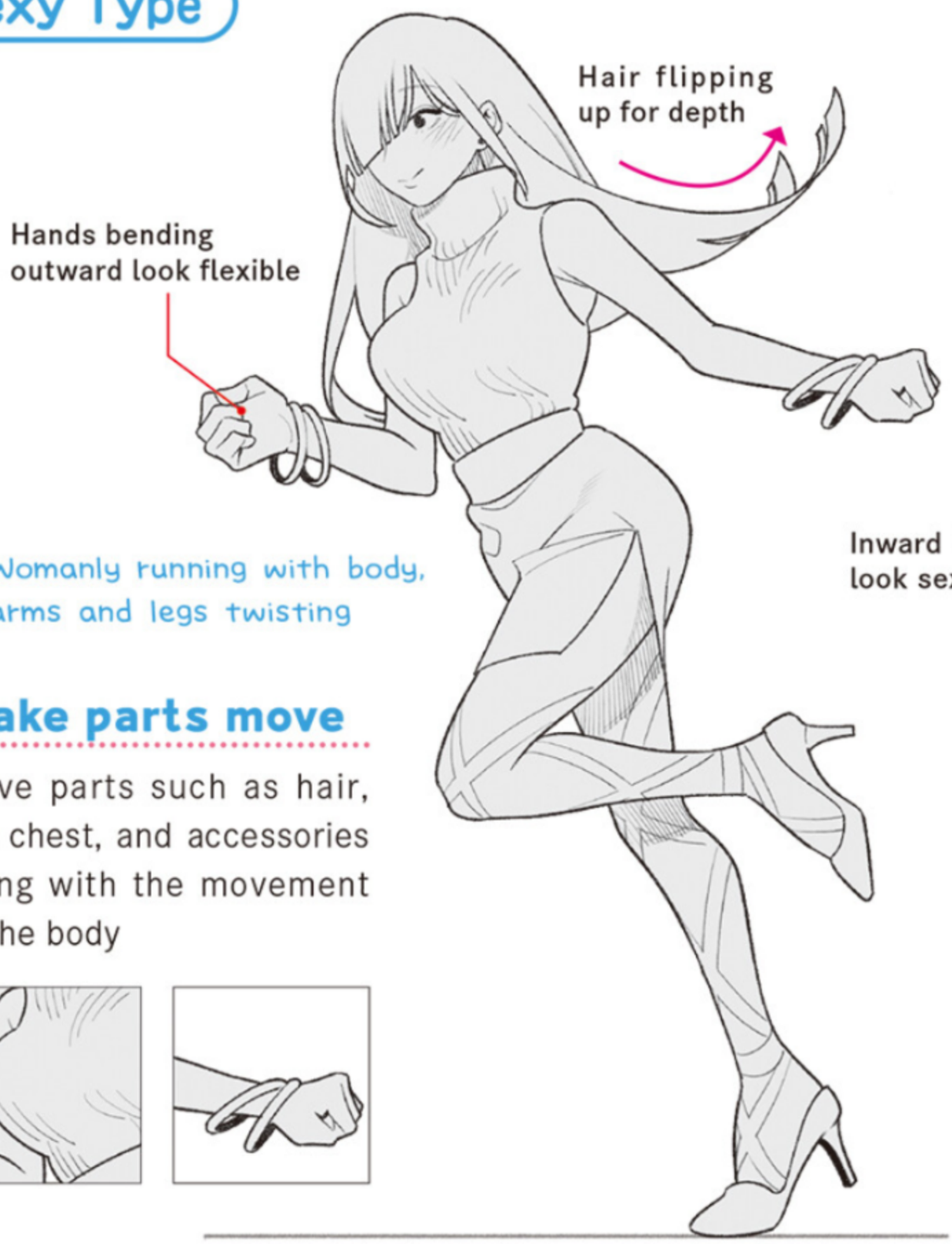
Cool Type



Similar to the active type pose, but adding straight lines makes it look cool and composed



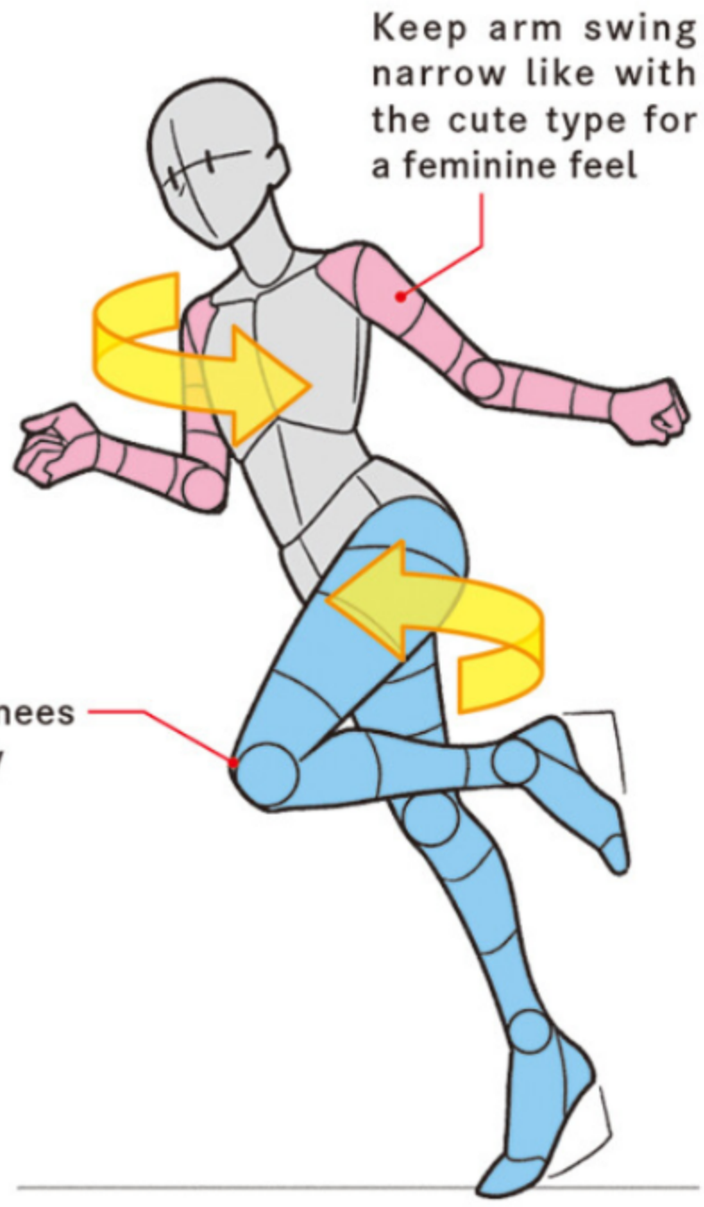
Sexy Type

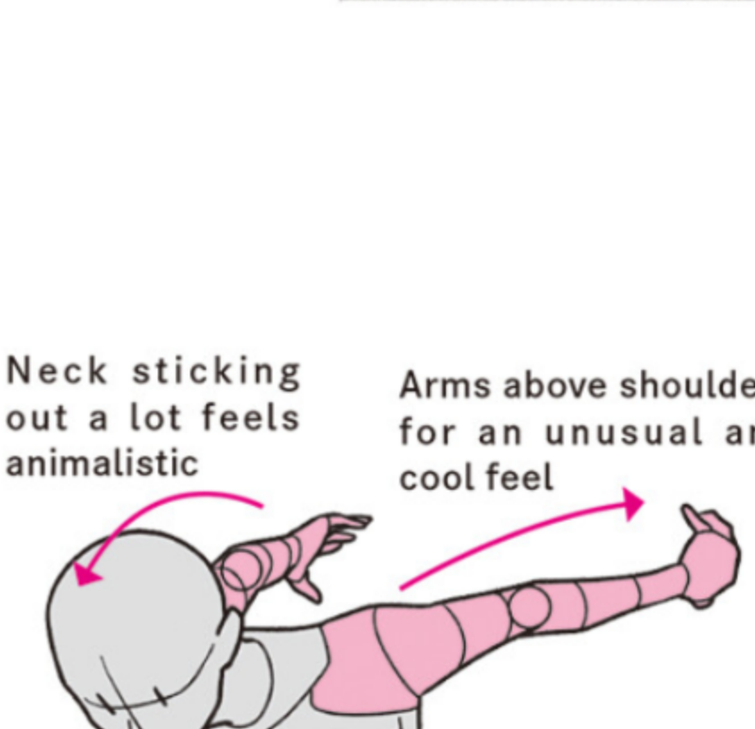


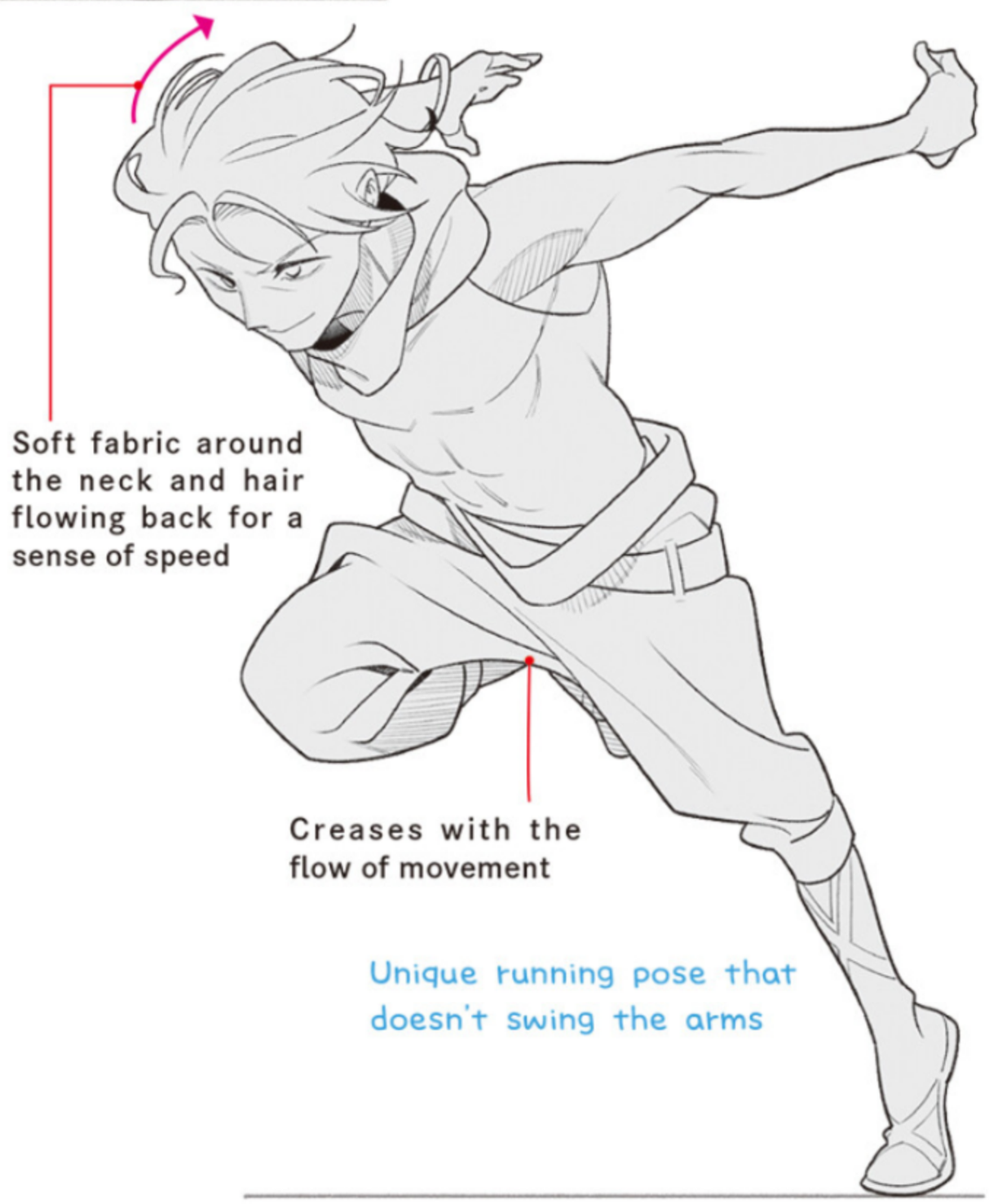
Womanly running with body, arms and legs twisting

Make parts move

Move parts such as hair, the chest, and accessories along with the movement of the body







Unique running pose that doesn't swing the arms

1

04

Basic Poses

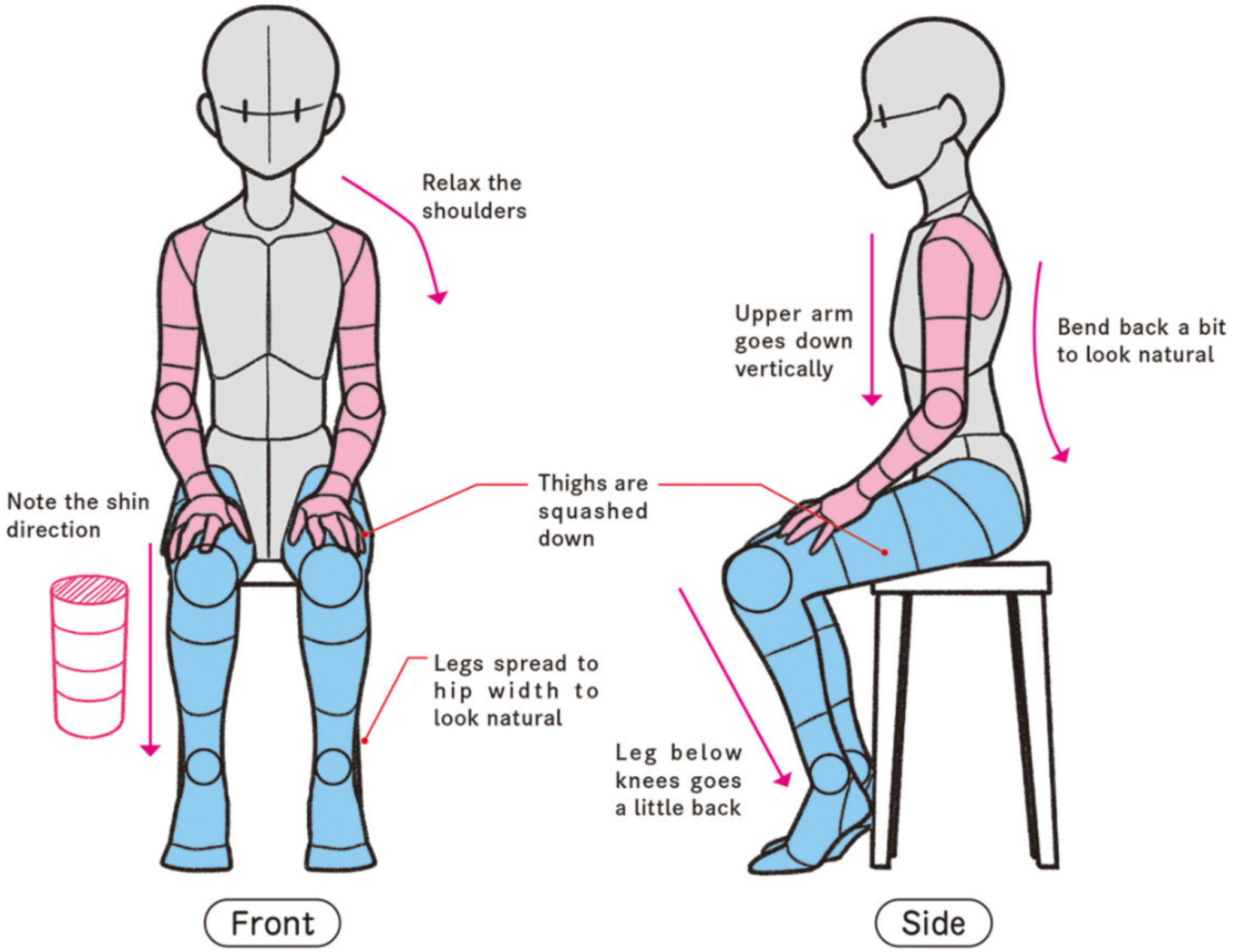
Sit

Note how the center of gravity is at the butt when sitting. Characters sit differently even in the same chair, and chair shapes can help express personality. First, take a look at the standard sitting pose.

Stability is Key

Make sure to seat the lower body firmly. If the chair has no back or armrests, the upper body should have movement restricted to vertical only for stability. Even with stable seating, arms and legs each have their own angles that need to be drawn with care. The drawing will look more convincing if you draw the chair carefully as well. Pay attention to the ground and make sure the character's feet are at the same height as the chair's legs.

At Different Angles



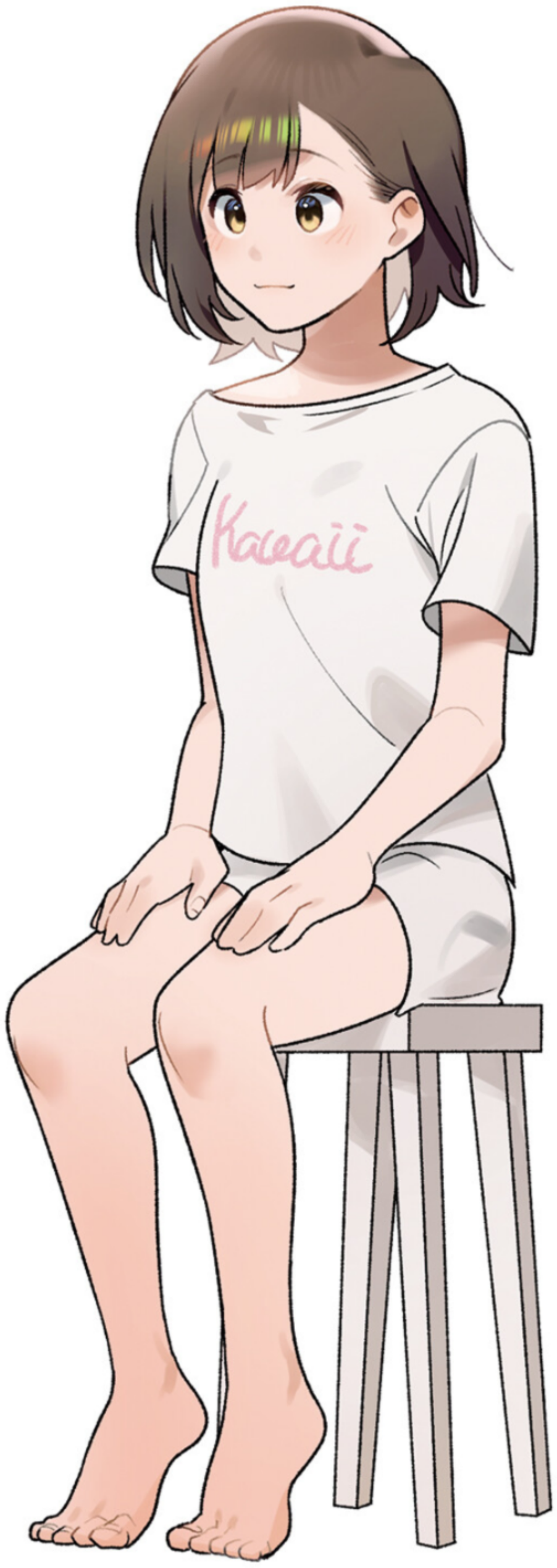
Front

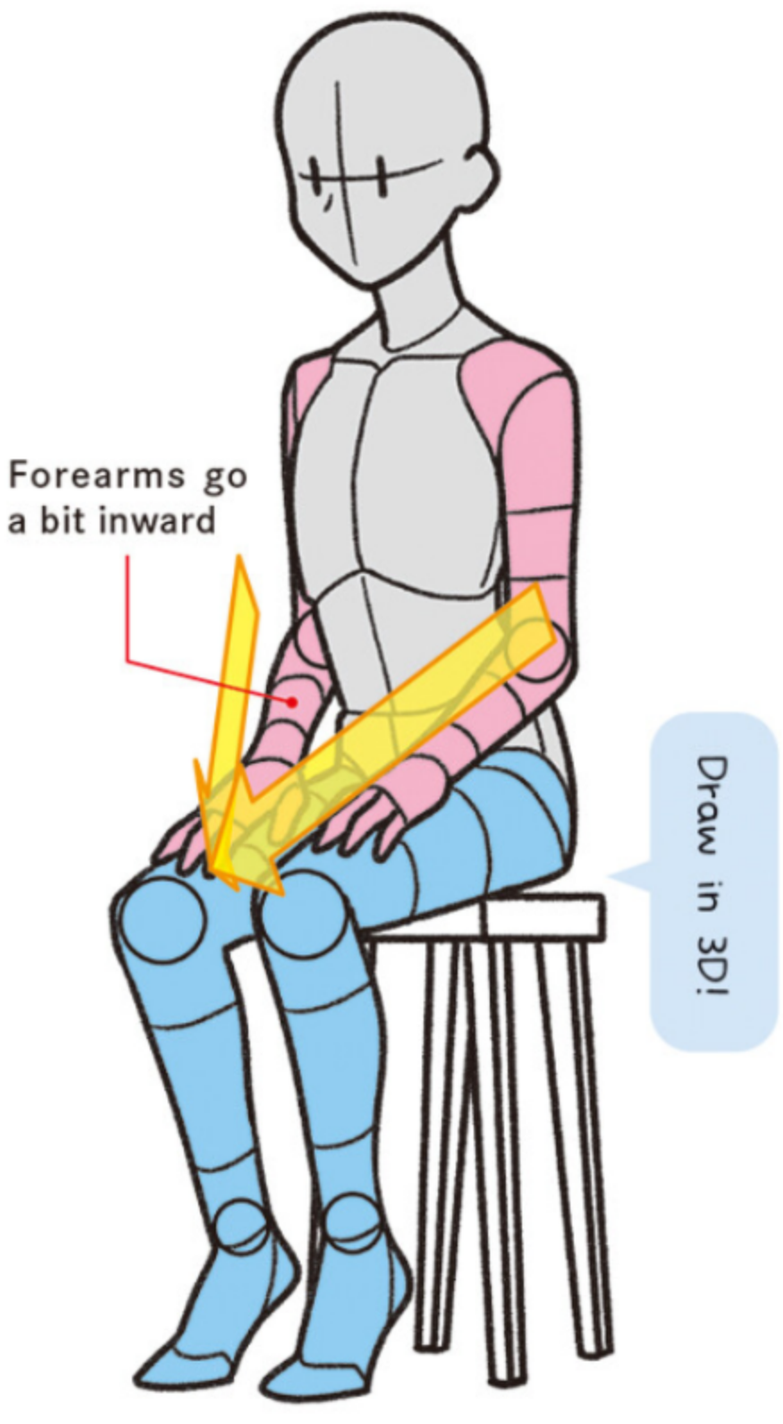
Side

Pose Focus

Pay attention to the ground

The part of the body touching the chair should squash down. Squashing the fat and muscles will show the weight of the body.



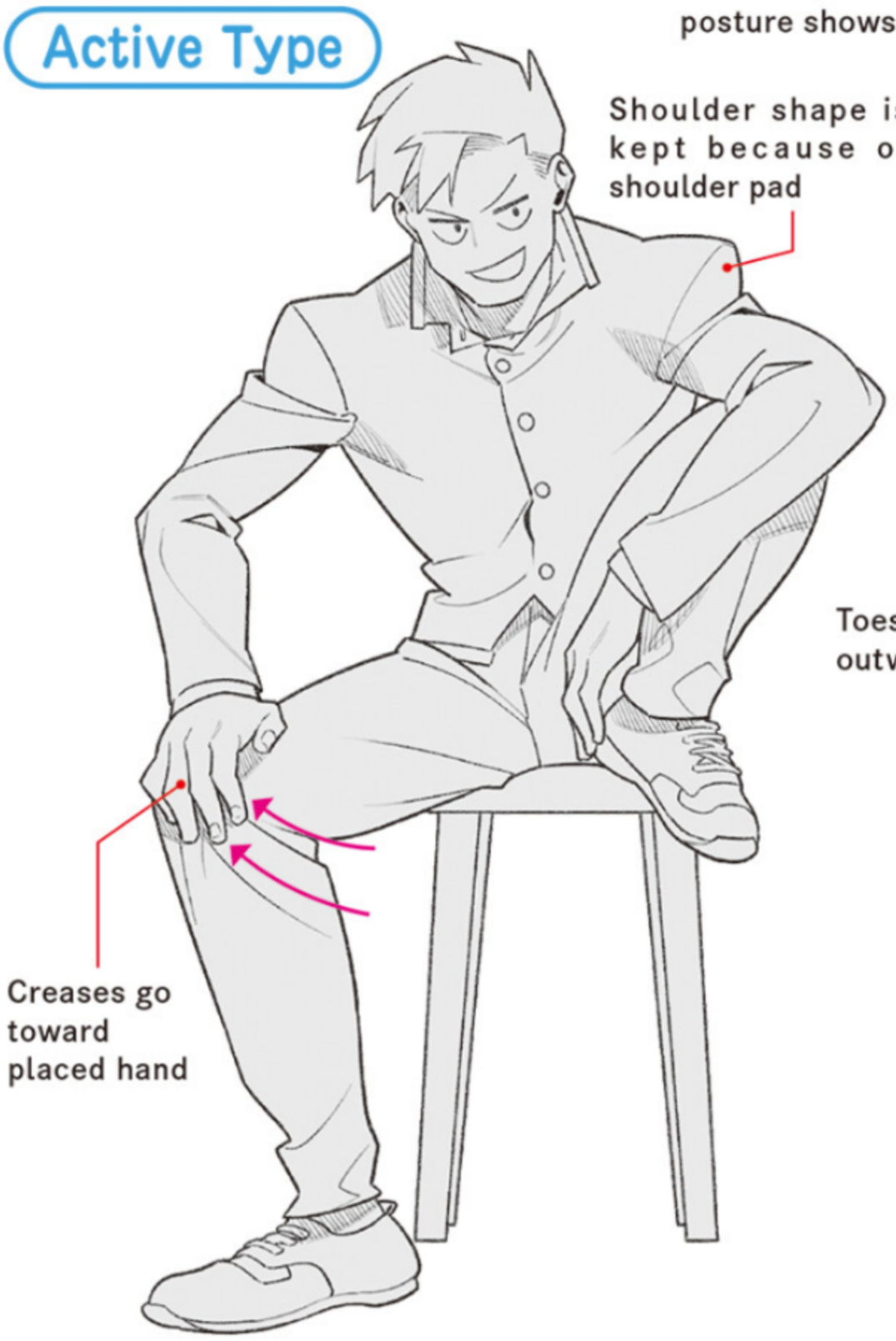


Angled

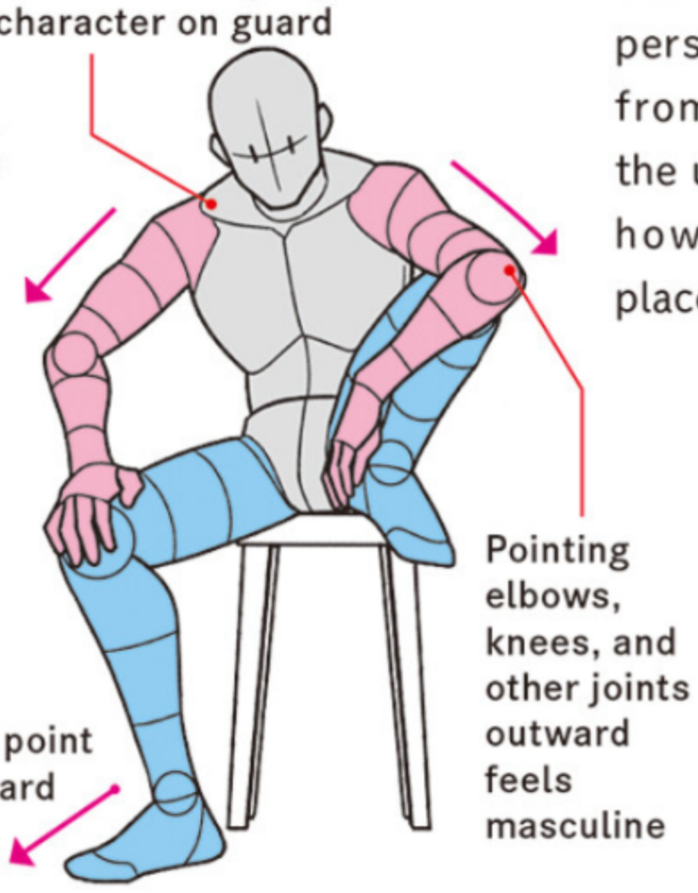
Male and Female Pose Differences

Take a look at this pose from different personalities. The sitting pose shows personality mainly from the angle of the upper body and how the feet are placed.

Active Type

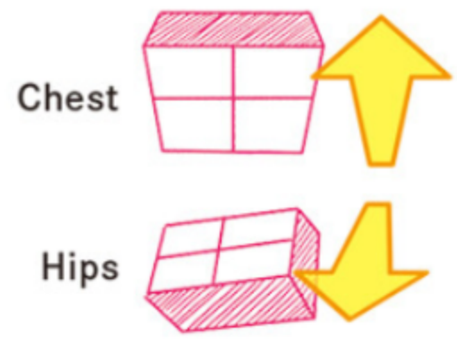


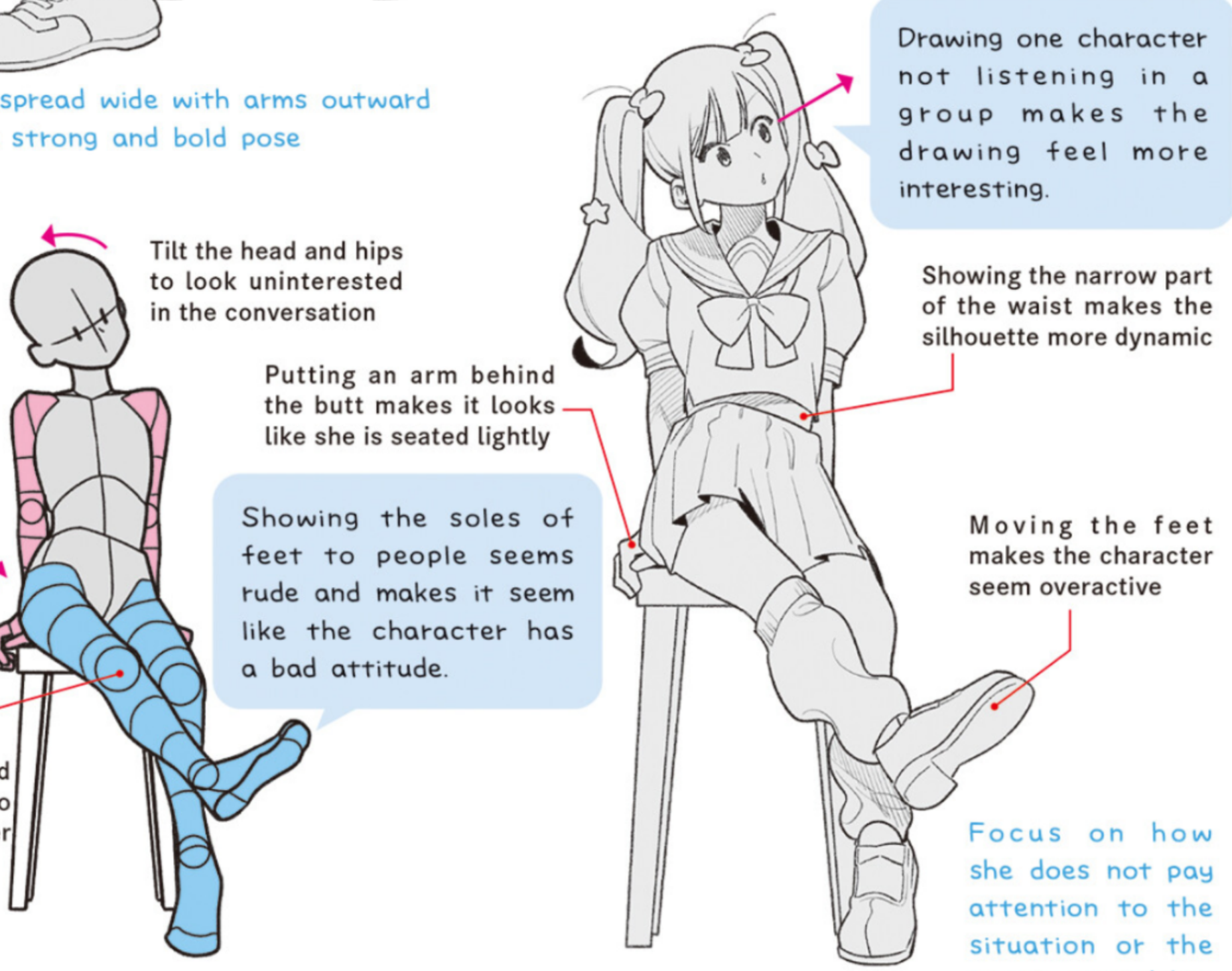
Legs spread wide with arms outward for a strong and bold pose



How the chest and hips fall

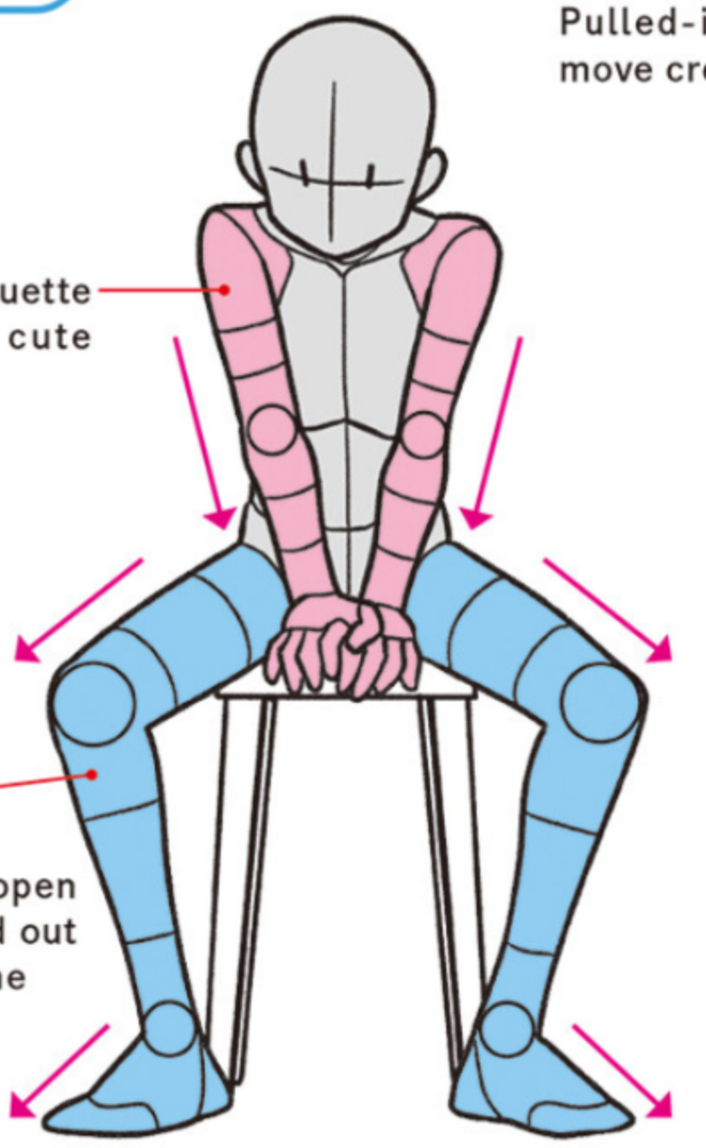
When rounding the back, note how the chest and hips fall.

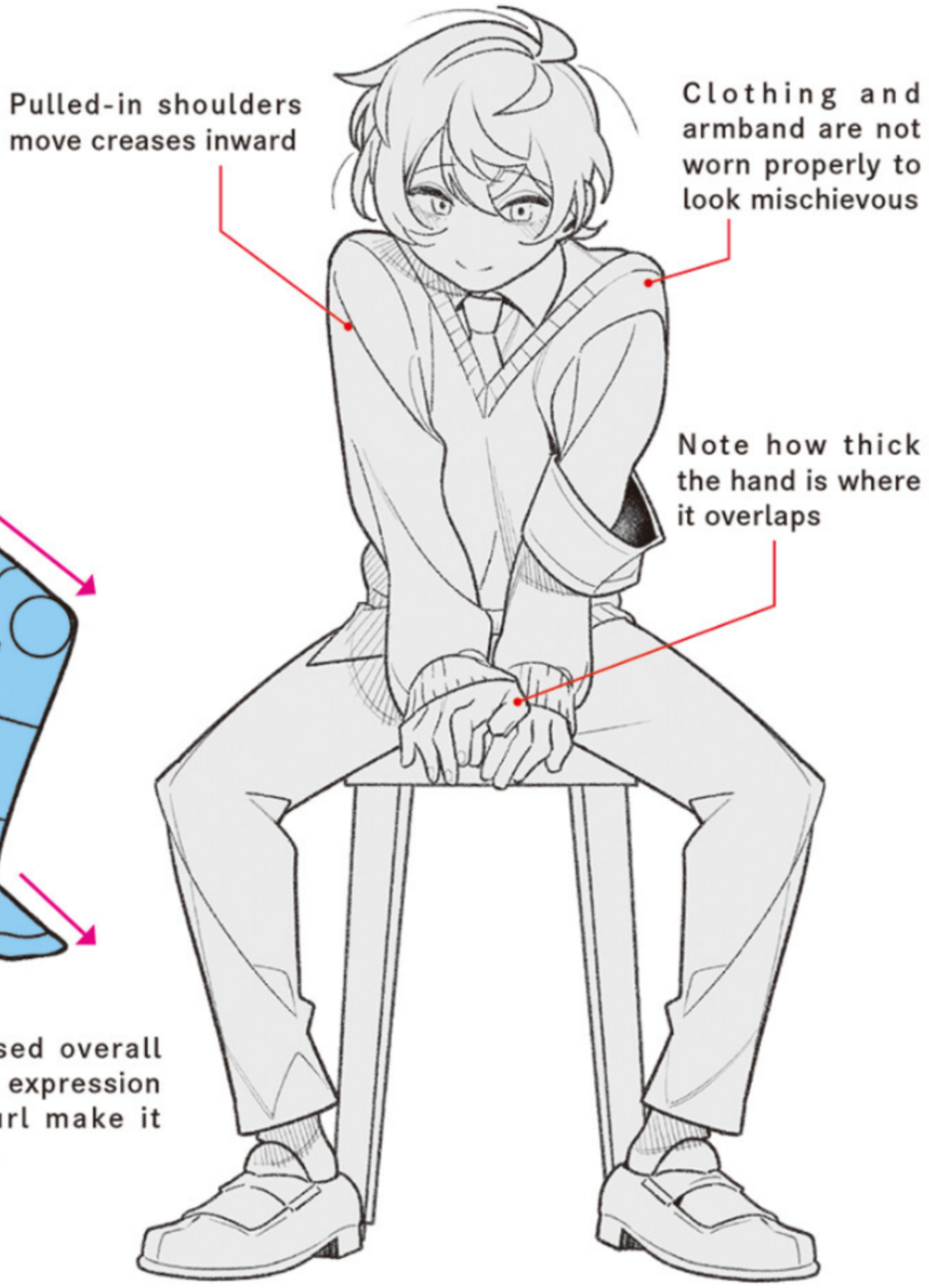




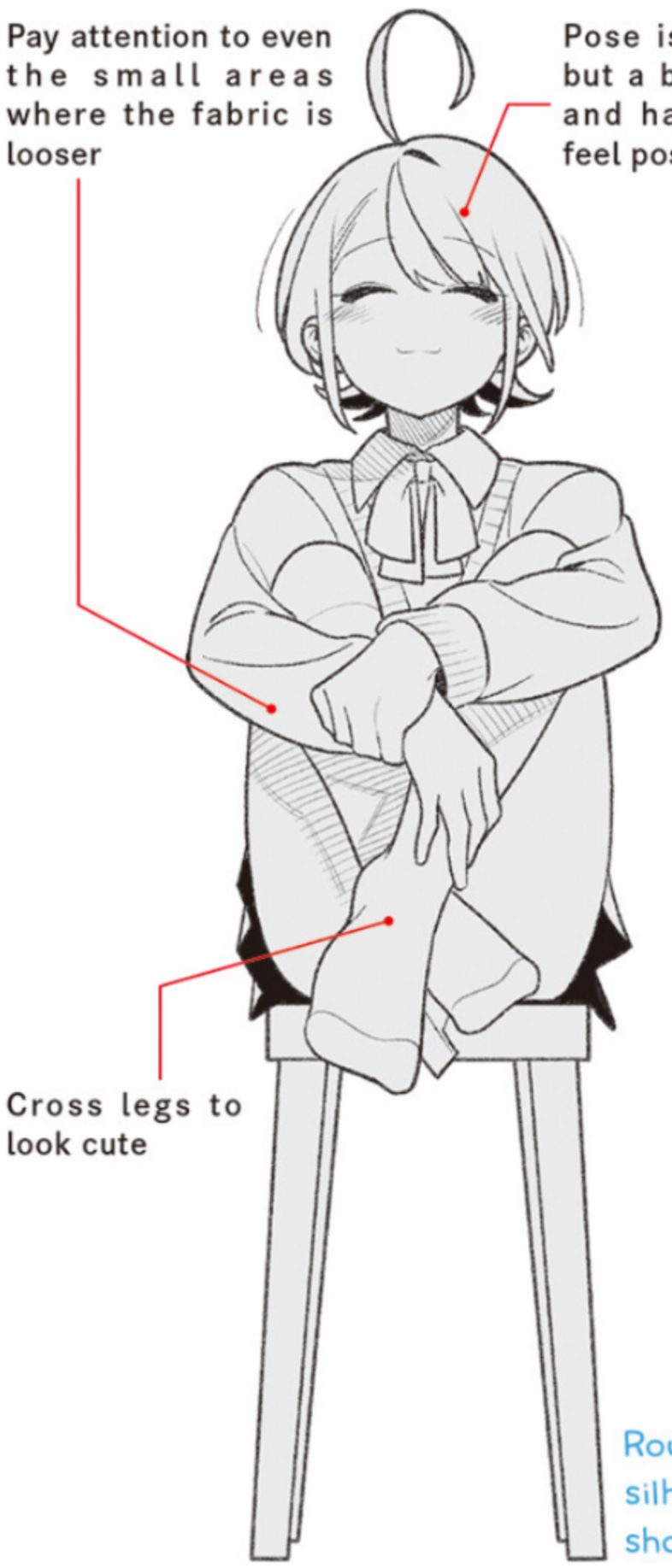
Focus on how she does not pay attention to the situation or the people around her

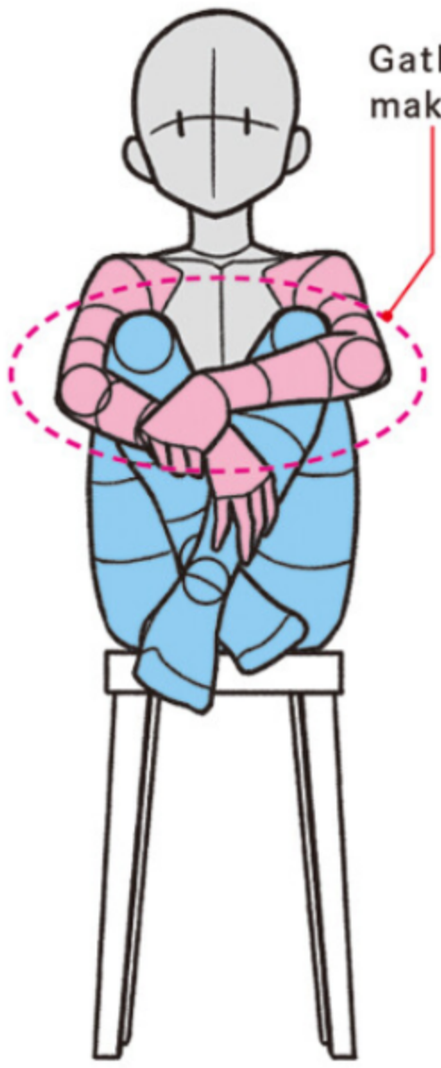
Cute Type





Combining a closed upper body with an open lower body (p. 34) creates a cute and masculine pose

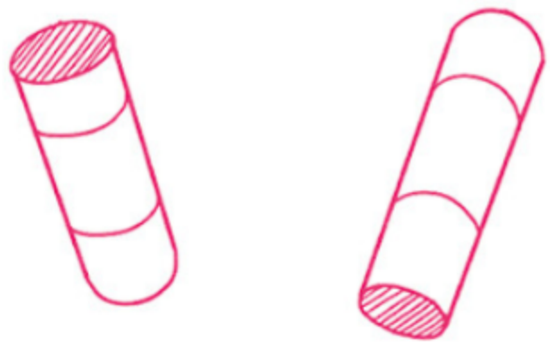




Rounded body and compact silhouette for a pose that shouts out cuteness

Note how legs overlap

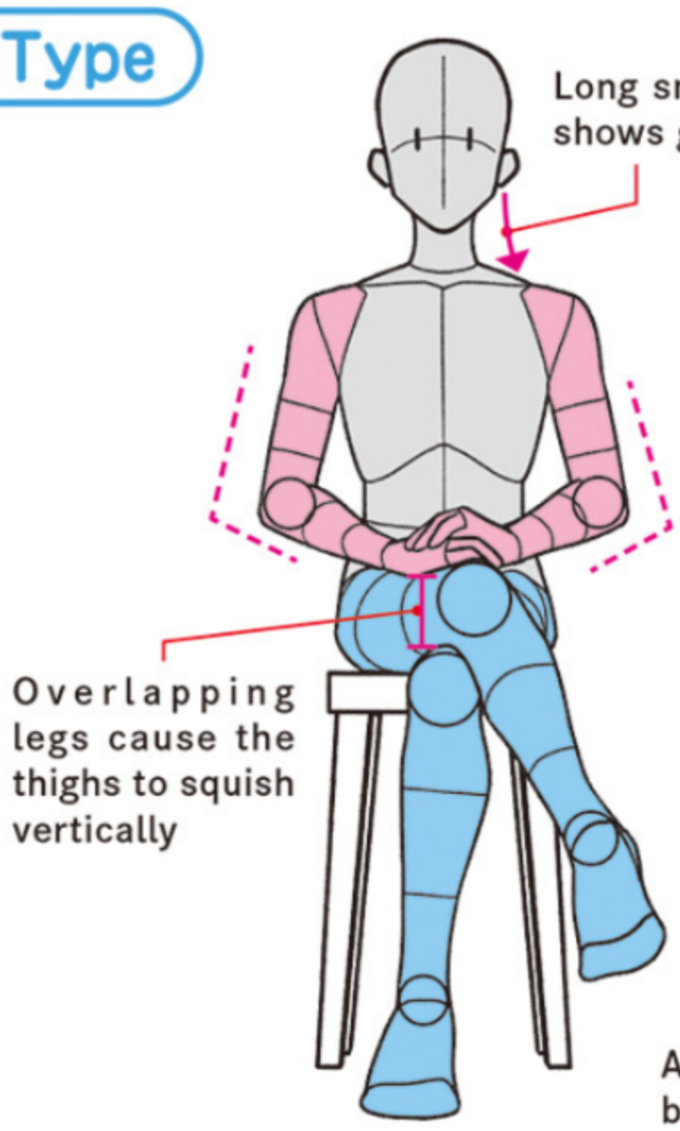
When the legs are crossed, the upper and lower parts tilt differently, so pay attention to how the legs move in 3D! The bottom part goes closer to the body for a bit of a bird's-eye view, while the upper part comes out for a view from below.

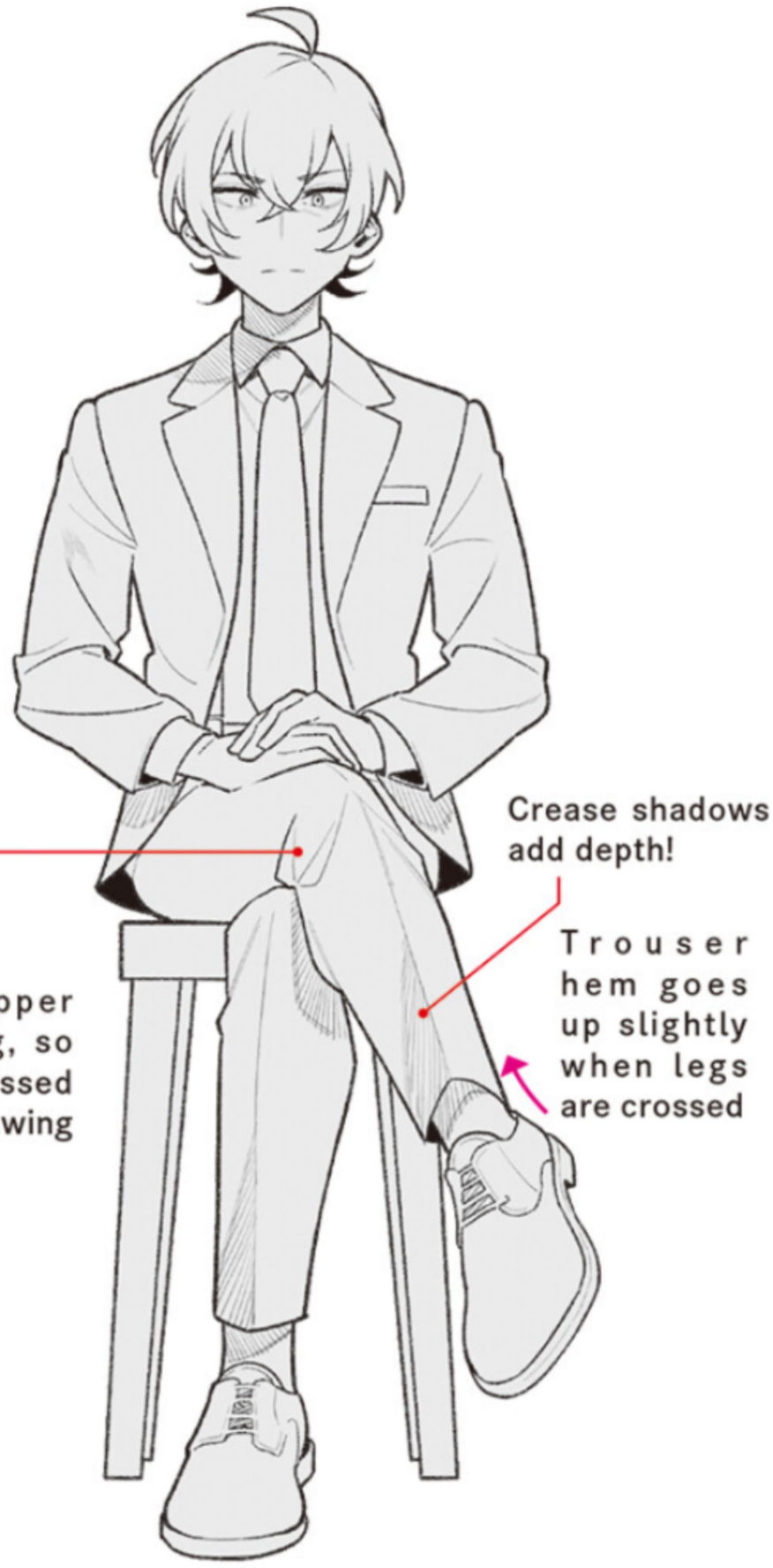


Lower part (right foot)

Upper part (left foot)

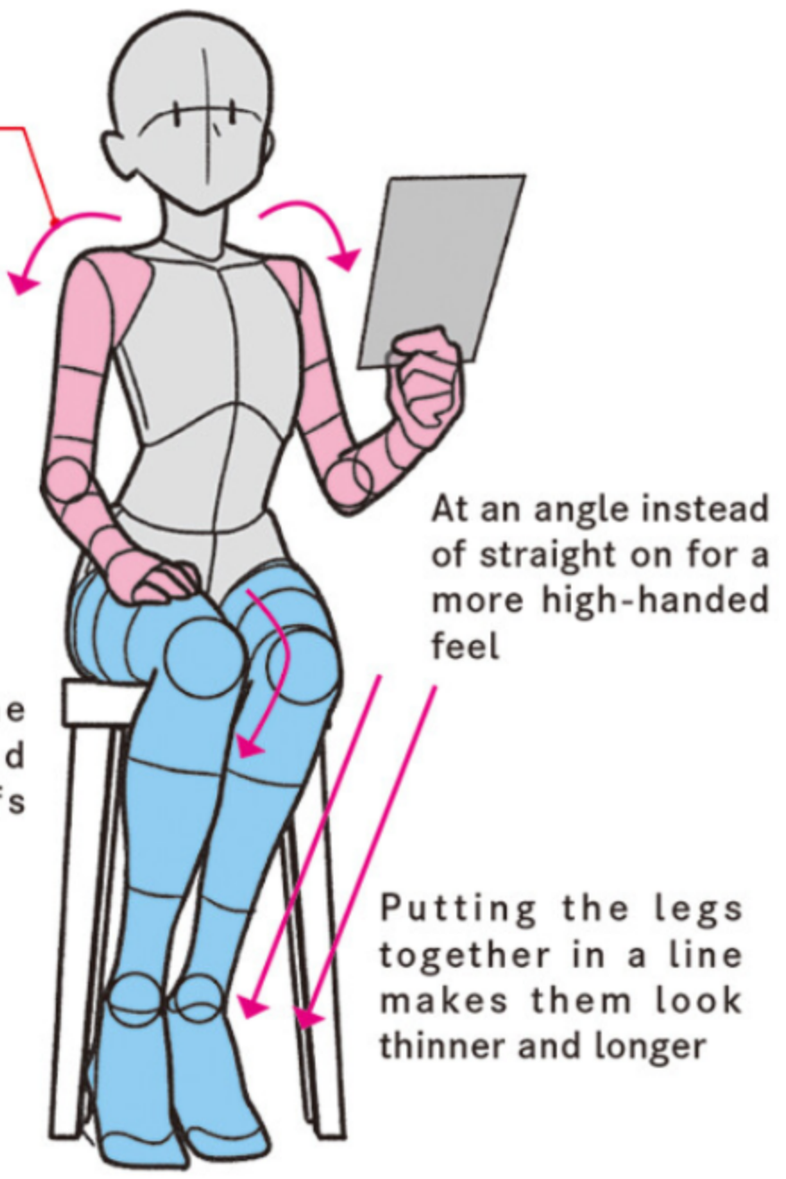
Cool Type





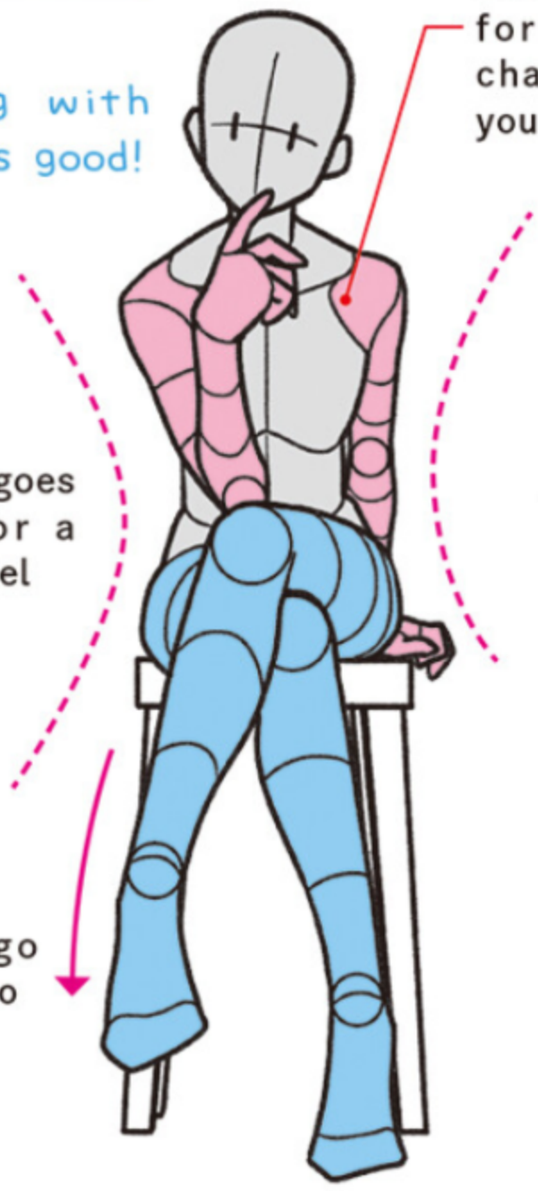
Good posture and crossed legs look cool and intimidating

Straight back and closed legs for a composed look while also looking tall at an angle

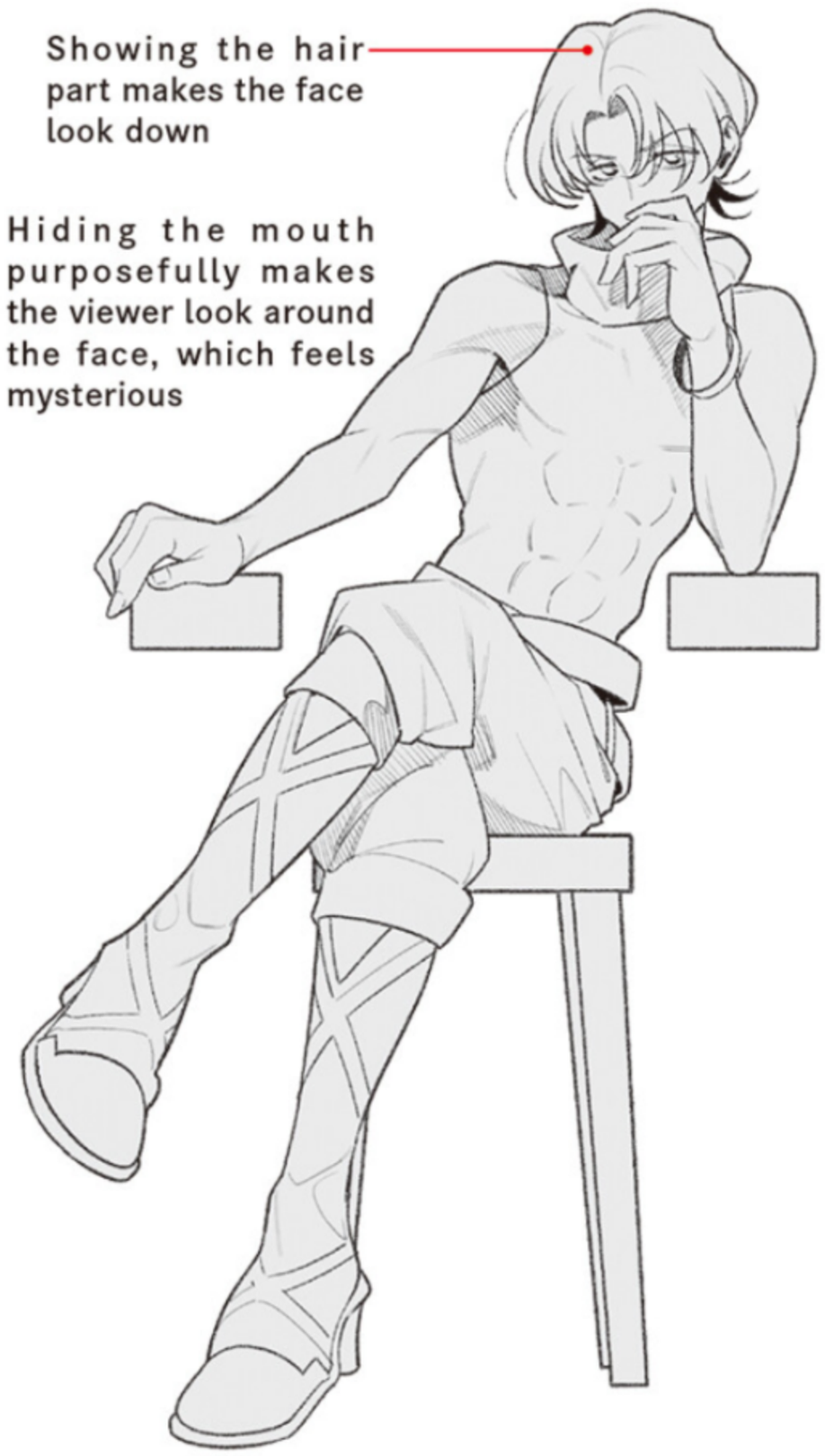


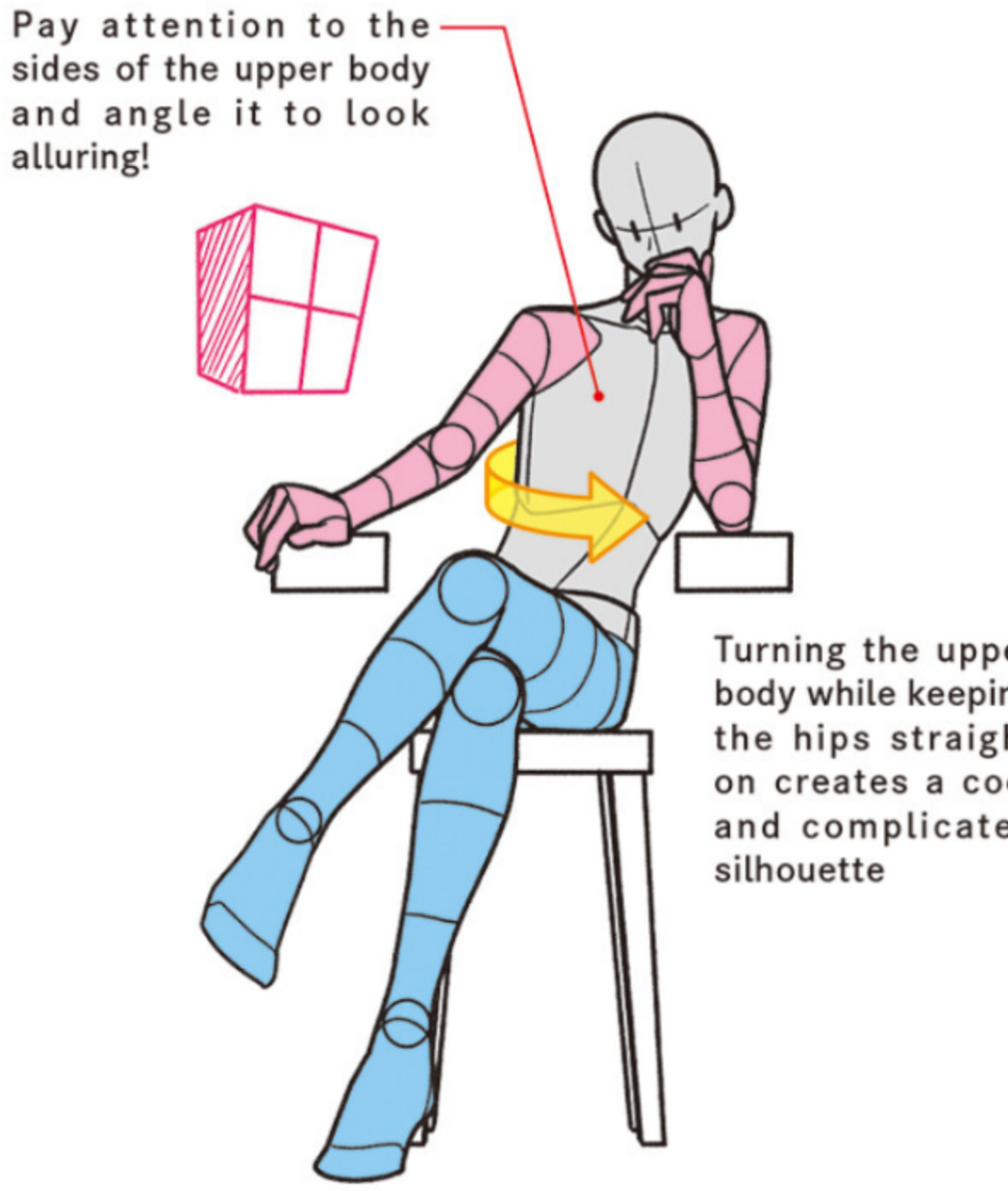
Sexy Type

Expressing with the hands is good!



Pulling elbows and knees inward for a feminine silhouette, with fingers posed for a sexier feel



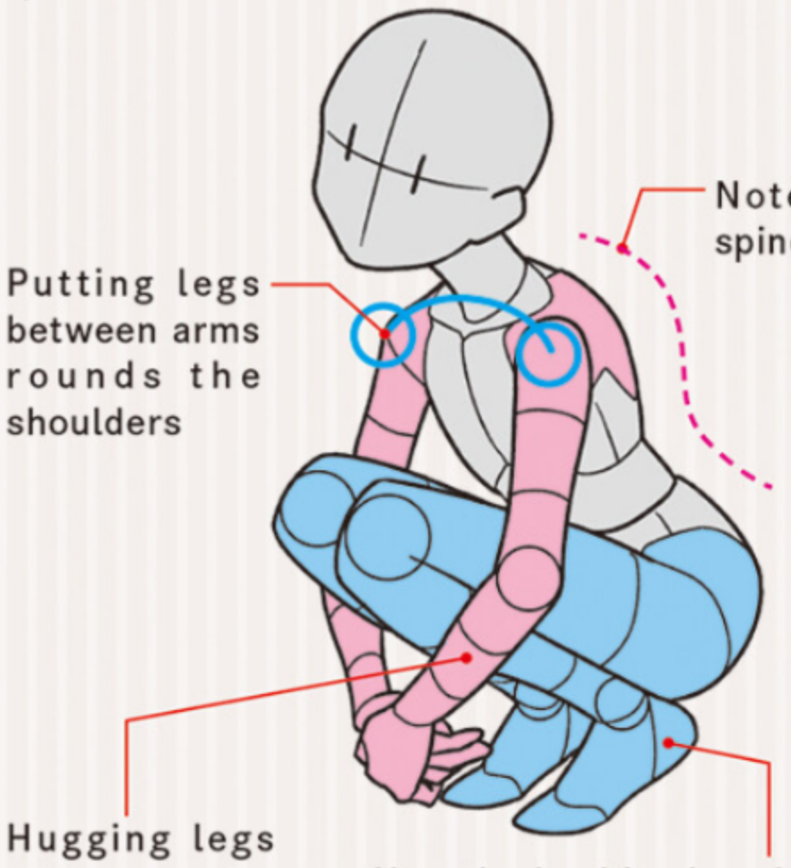


Be creative with the chair shape to emphasize the character, like using an armrest to make the character feel pompous

Column

Crouch

Crouching poses fit under sitting poses. The butt does not touch the ground, so pay attention to balance. The impression of the pose also changes depending on whether the heel is on the ground or not. Take a look at the crouching poses of different personalities.

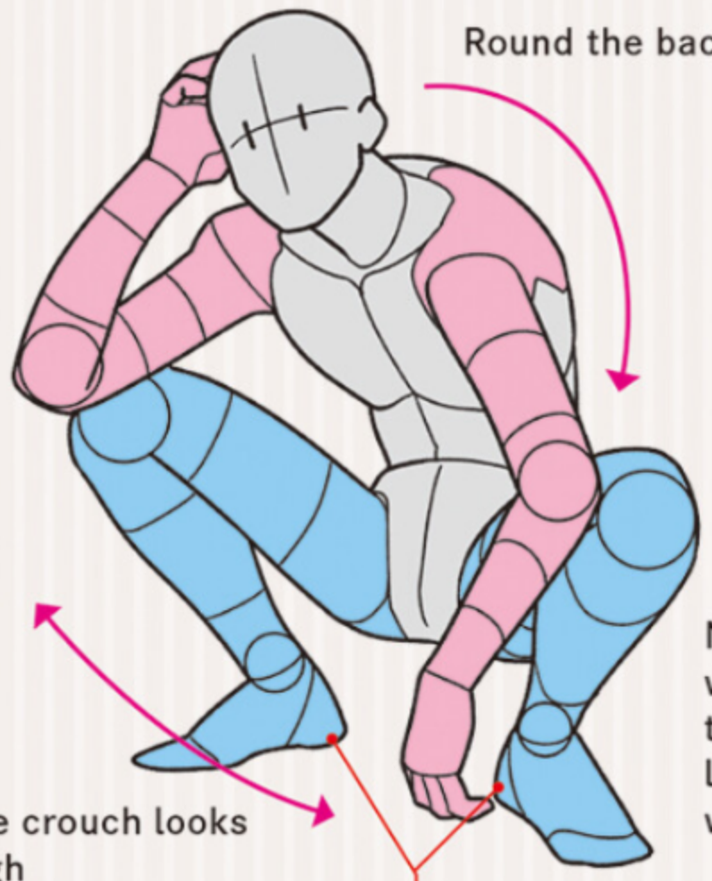


A small and cute crouch

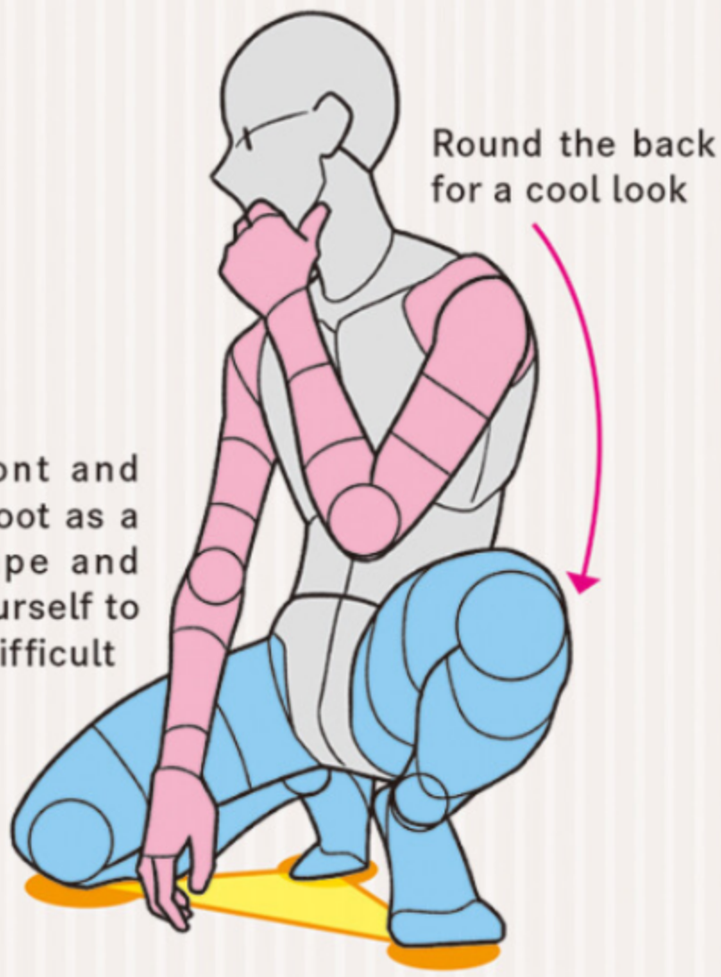
A pose that tilts parts and shows multiple faces purposefully even while crouching

Inner thighs look graceful

Crouching makes the butt go up, which is unstable. Place arms on knees and thighs to stabilize the upper body.



A big and unruly crouch



Draw vertical lines on the slacks to show the knee shape

Location of the center of gravity

The center of gravity looks better when it is off to one side. This character has his weight on his left foot.

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05

Basic Poses

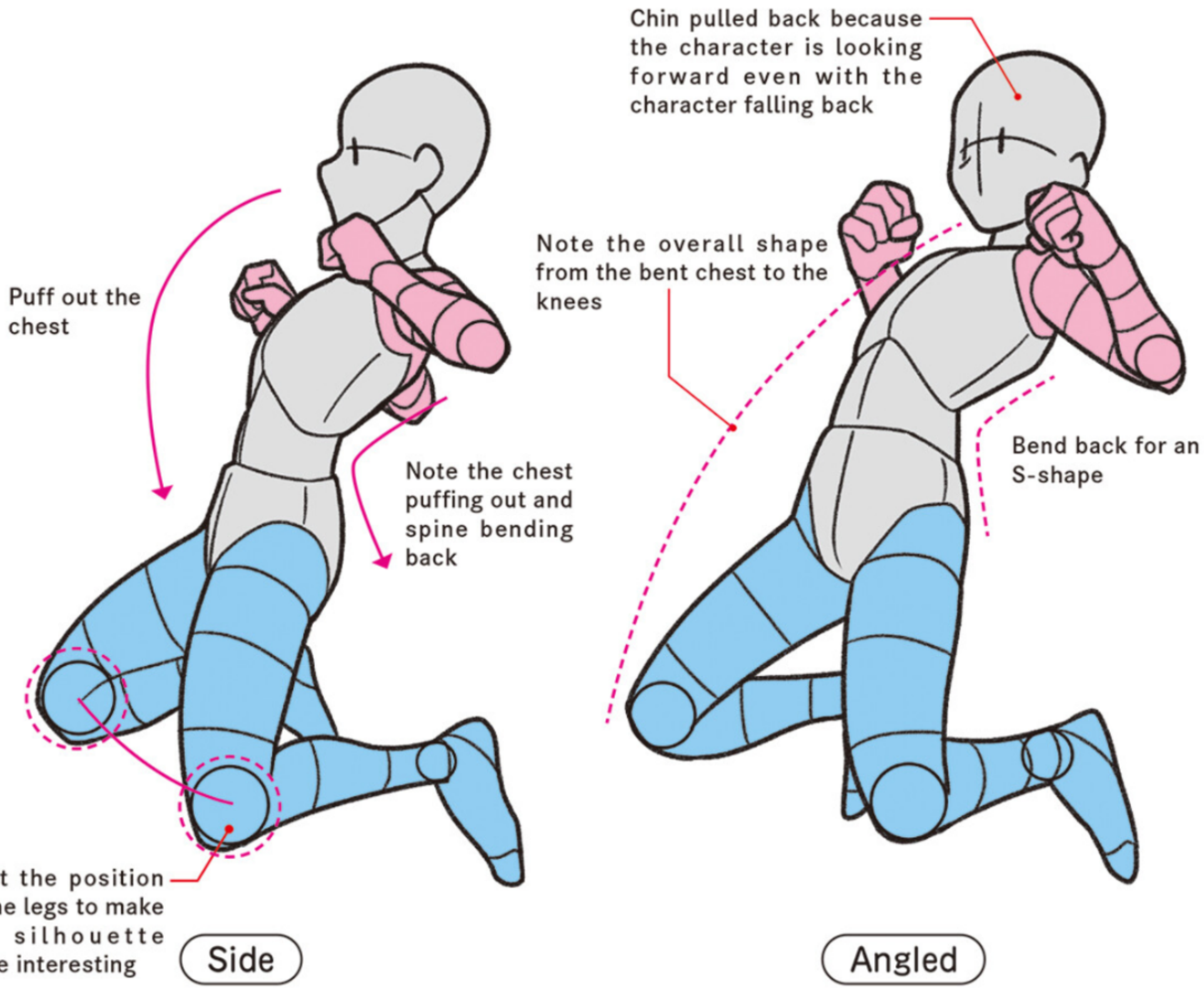
Jump

Pay extra attention to the shape of the feet in jumping poses. It's important to make them look like they aren't touching the ground. When drawing the character, focus on making it look like they're floating by moving the clothes and hair. Let's start with the basic jumping pose.

Capture the Jump Moment

The character isn't just floating. The pose will look more natural if you show part of the body with strength in it. Bend elbows and knees to show power in them and tilt the arms and legs slightly to show movement. The pose looks different right after jumping and right before landing, so consider the angles of everything when drawing the character.

At Different Angles

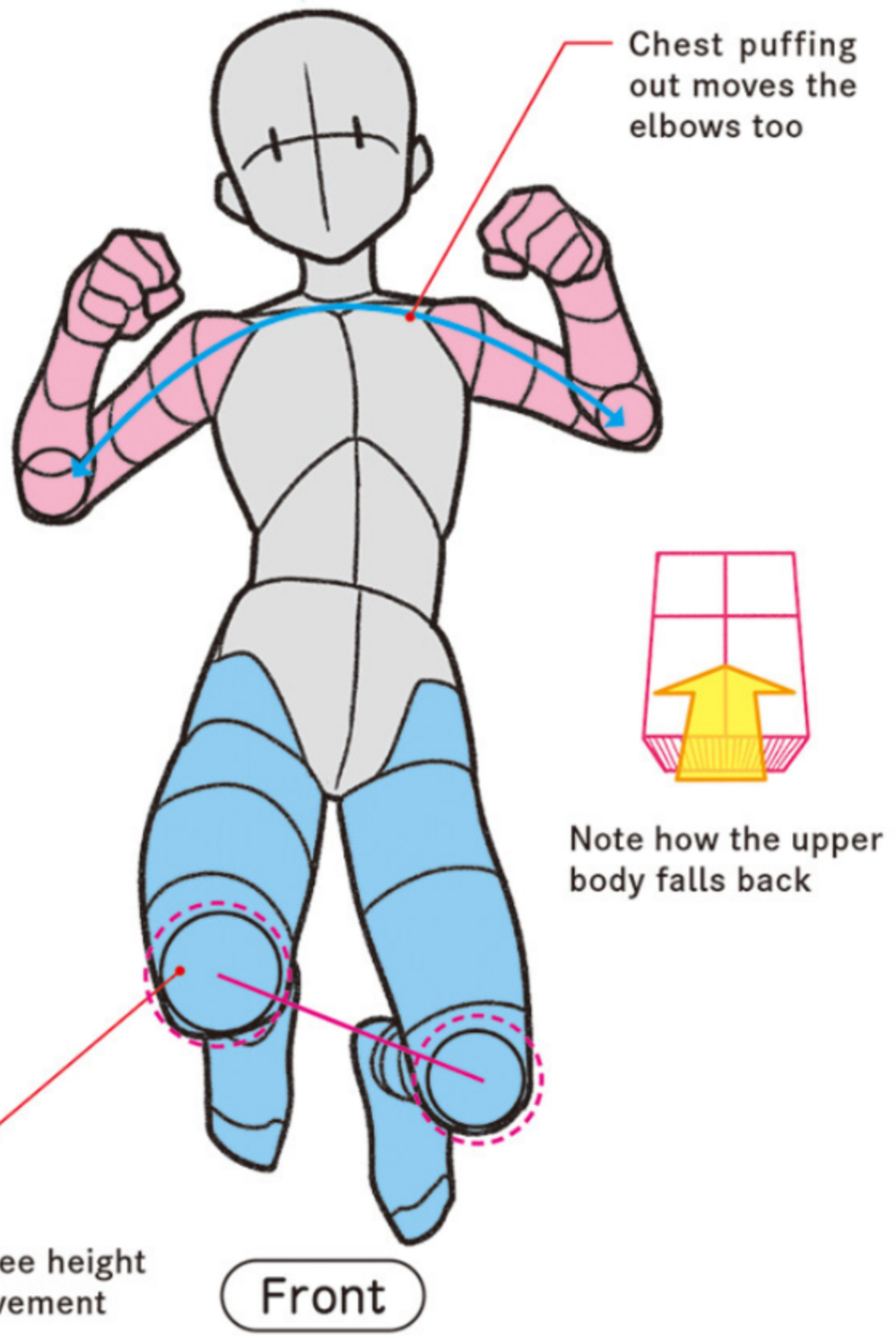


Pose Focus

Exaggerate fluttering

Make things flutter more than they would with a running pose. Since this is a jumping pose, make things move like they're floating!

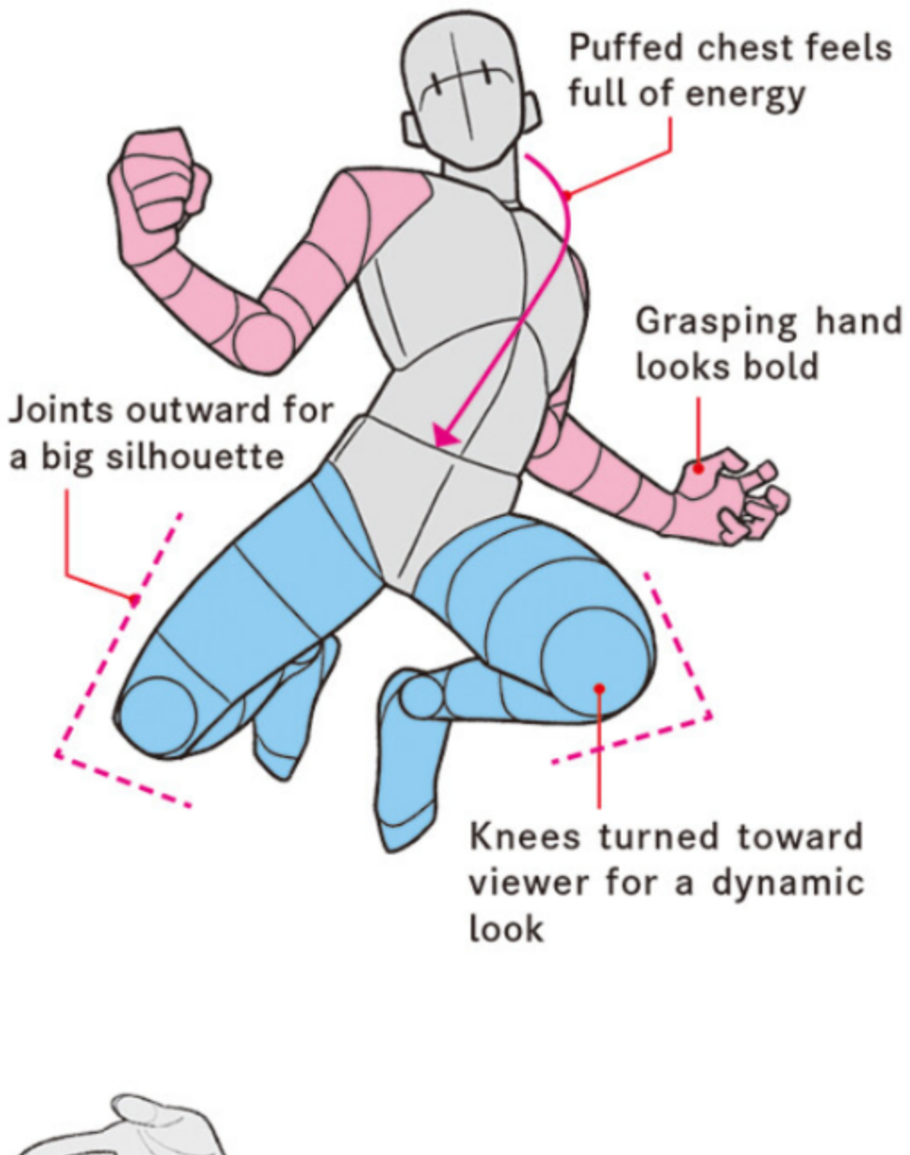
Keep elbows and knees separate, because it'll look like the character is kneeling if they're together!



Male and Female Pose Differences

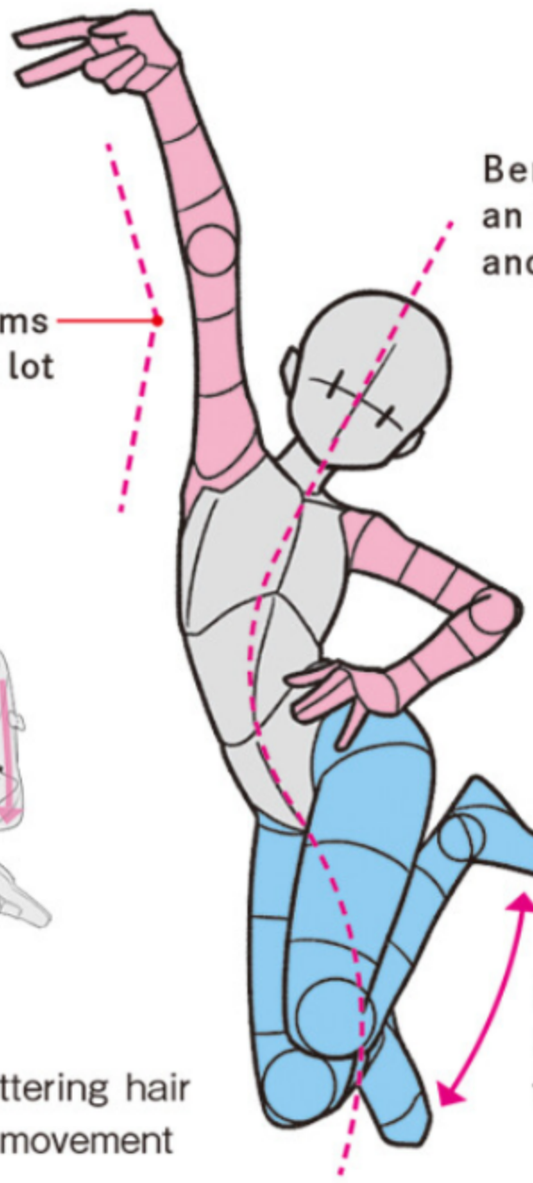
Active Type

You can draw this pose with a lot of freedom since the whole body is floating.
The way the arms and legs swing adds a lot of individuality.



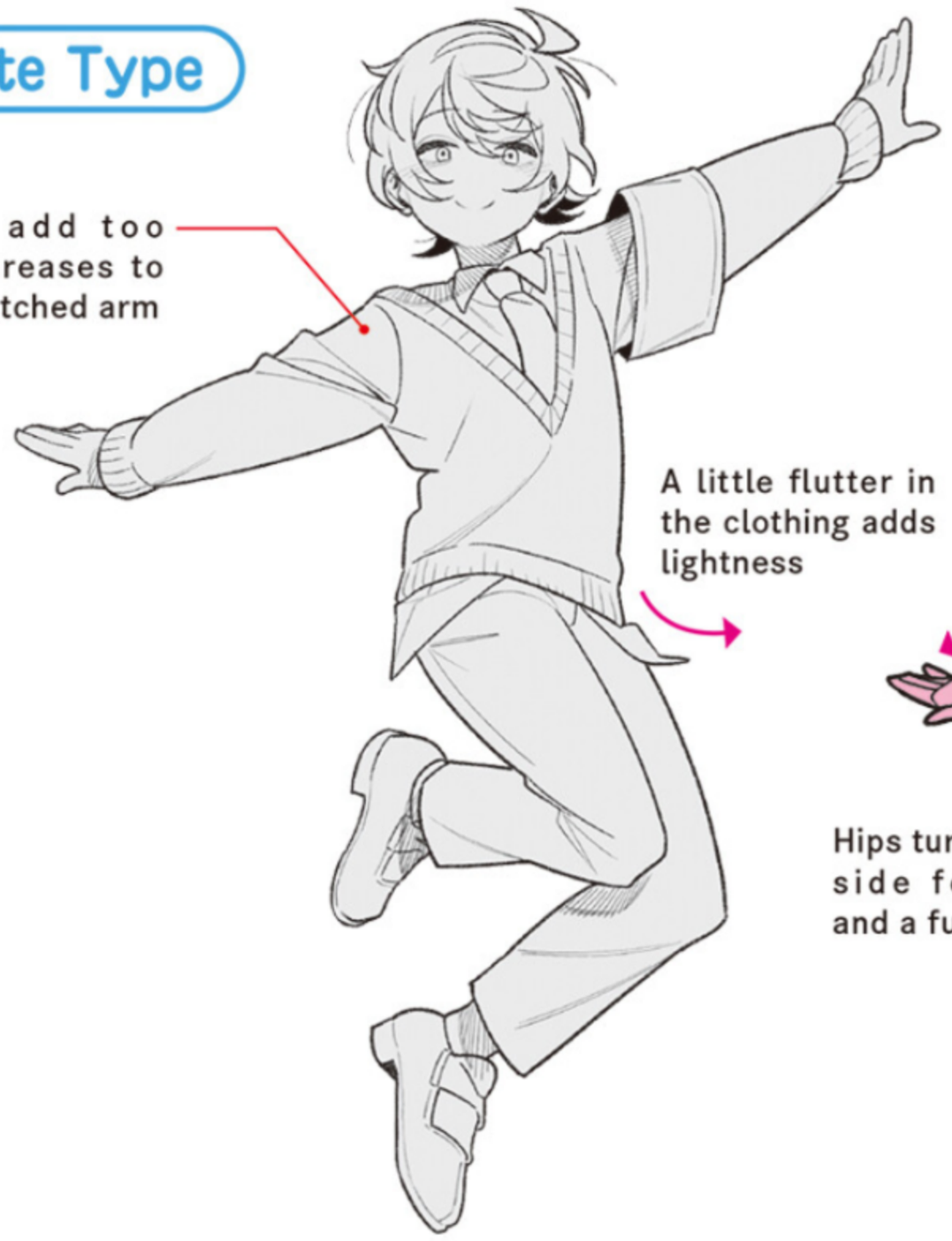
Elbows, knees, and arms turned outward along with a wide-open mouth to look bold

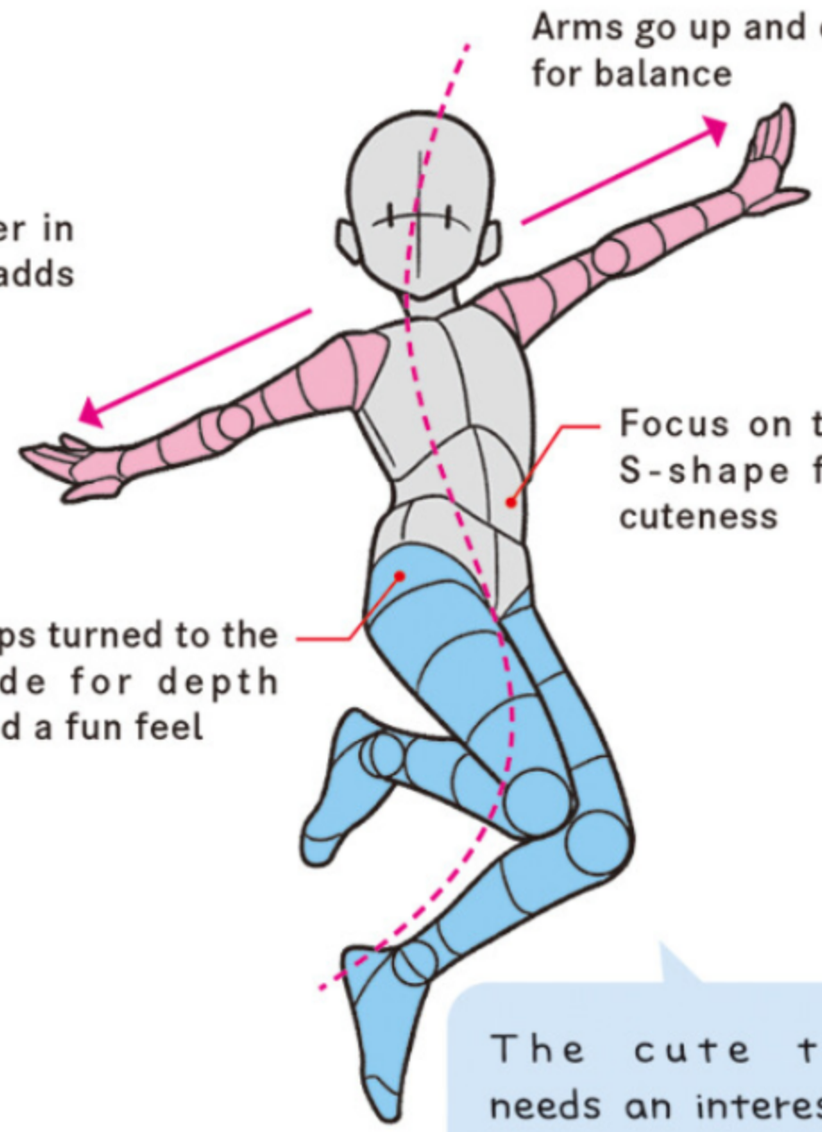
Unify the flow of fluttering hair and the skirt to show movement



Cute Type

Combine open and closed poses for a boyish but cute look

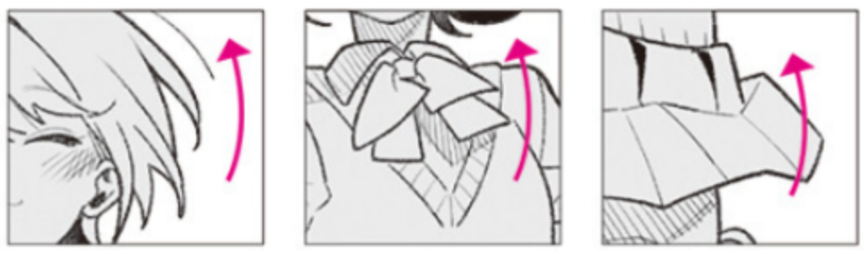




The cute type needs an interesting silhouette.

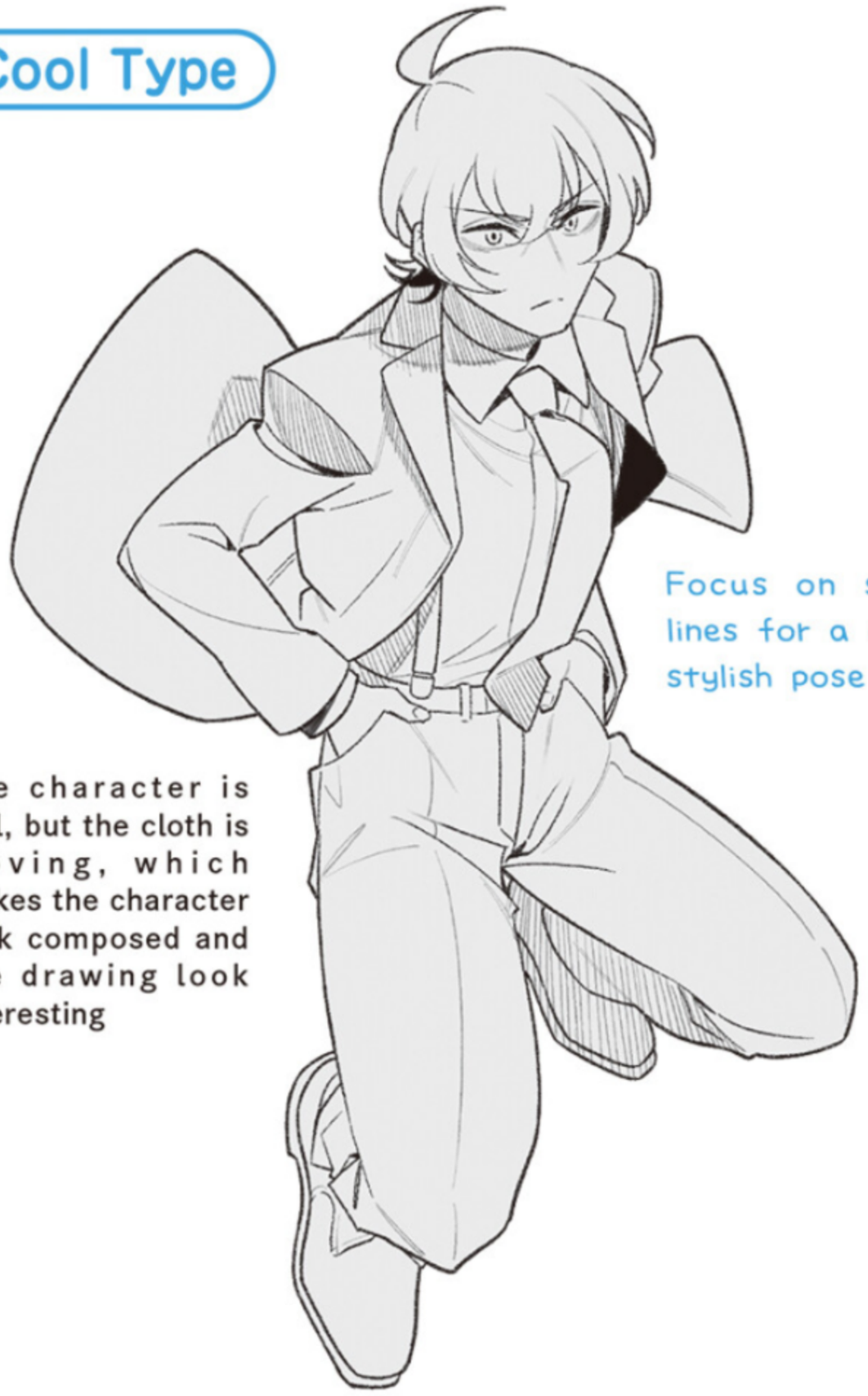
Sway in the same direction

Things that sway like hair, ribbons, and skirts should move in the same direction!



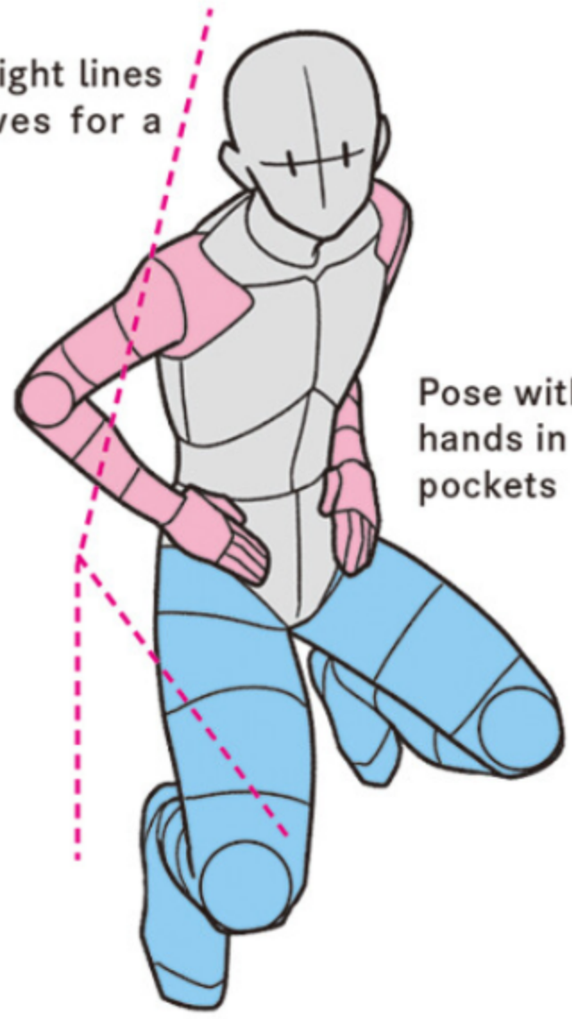
Elbows and arms pulled inward for a smaller and cuter image that is more girlish than the boy example

Cool Type



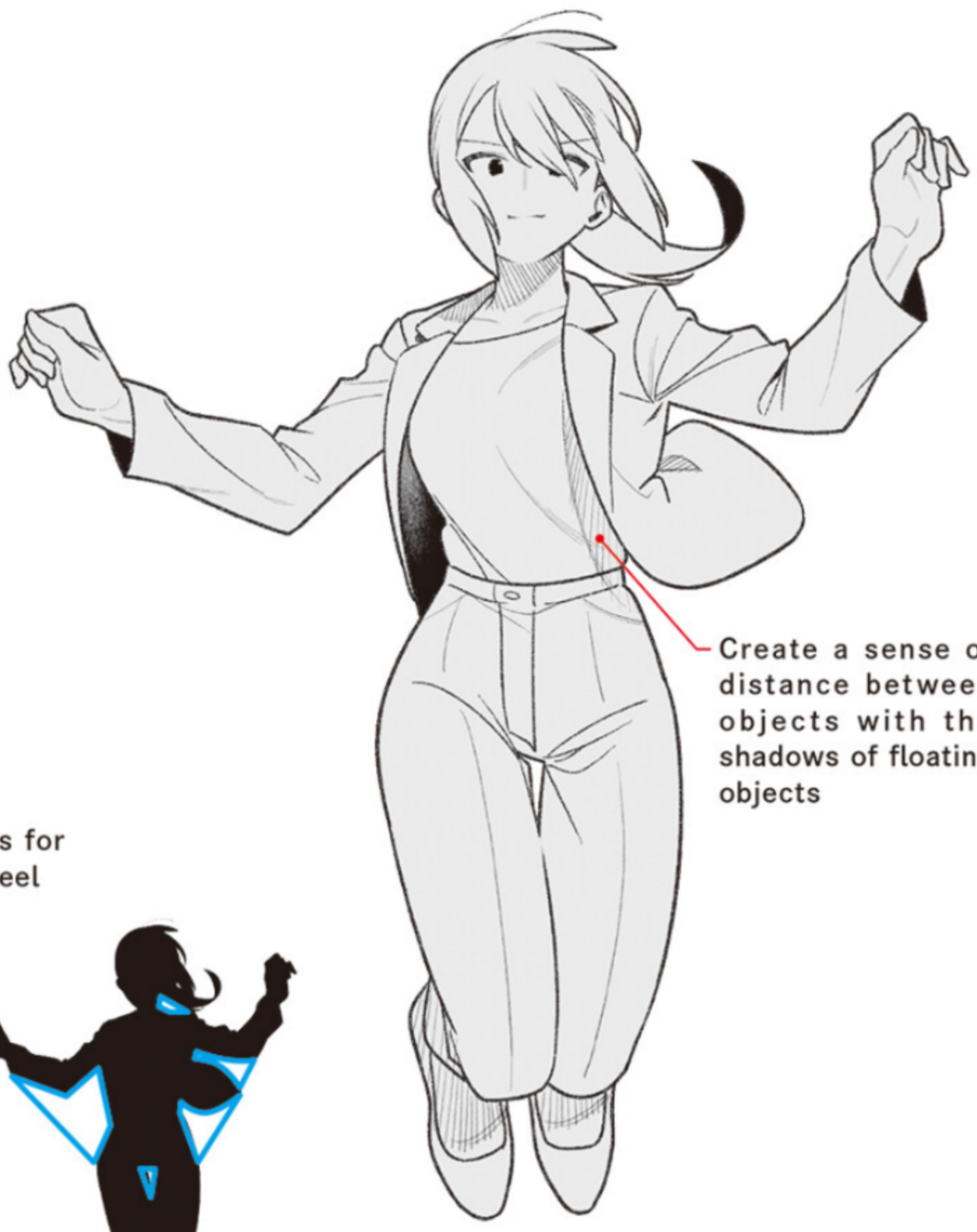
The character is still, but the cloth is moving, which makes the character look composed and the drawing look interesting

Focus on straight lines for a cool and stylish pose

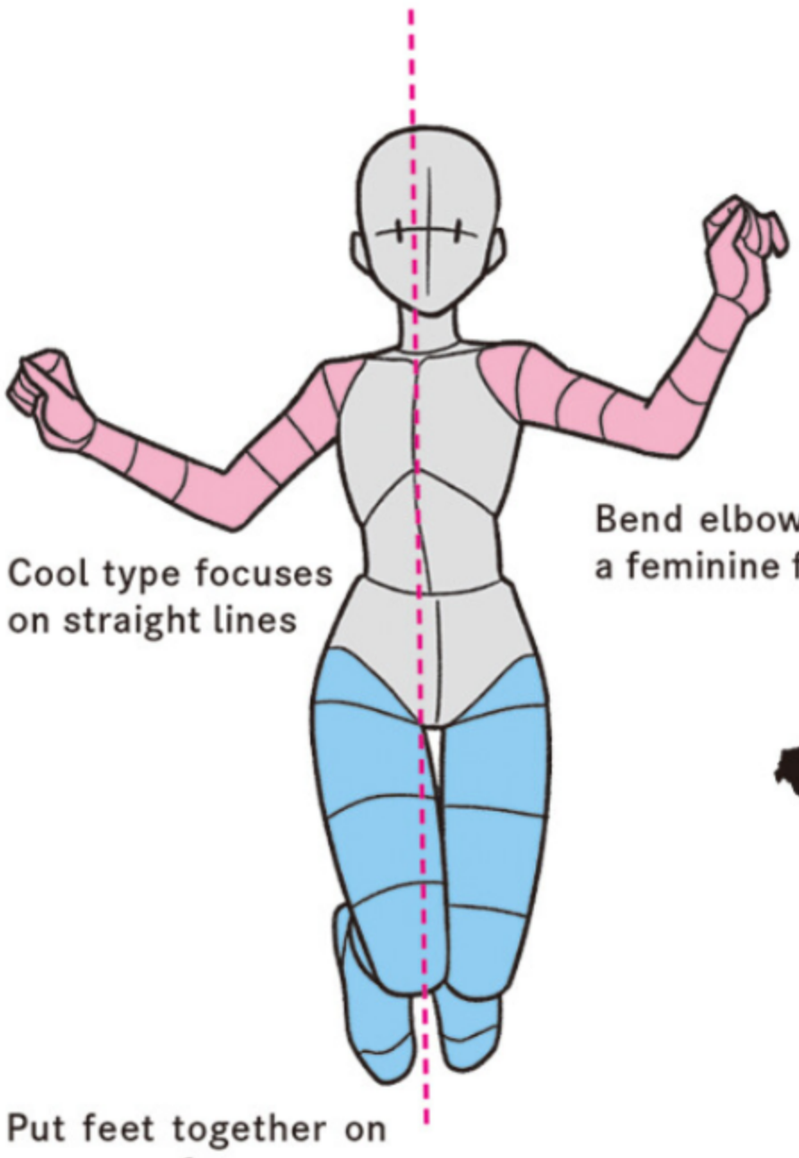


More straight lines than curves for a cool feel

Pose with hands in pockets



Create a sense of distance between objects with the shadows of floating objects



Cool type focuses on straight lines

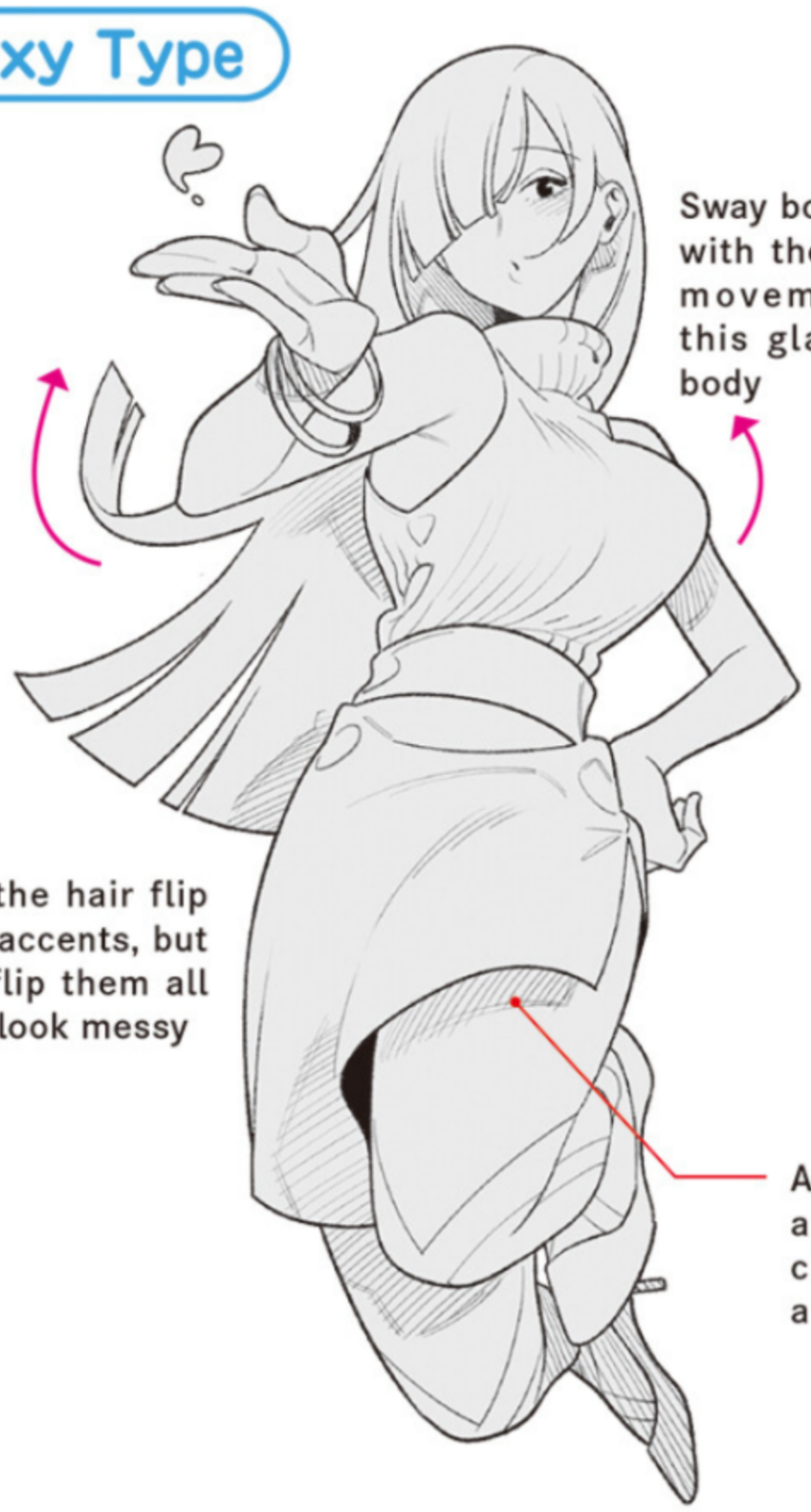
Bend elbows for a feminine feel

Put feet together on purpose for a more serious personality

Make the pose easier to understand with detailed negative space (p.25)

S-shape adds femininity, but focus on straight lines for a cooler look

Sexy Type

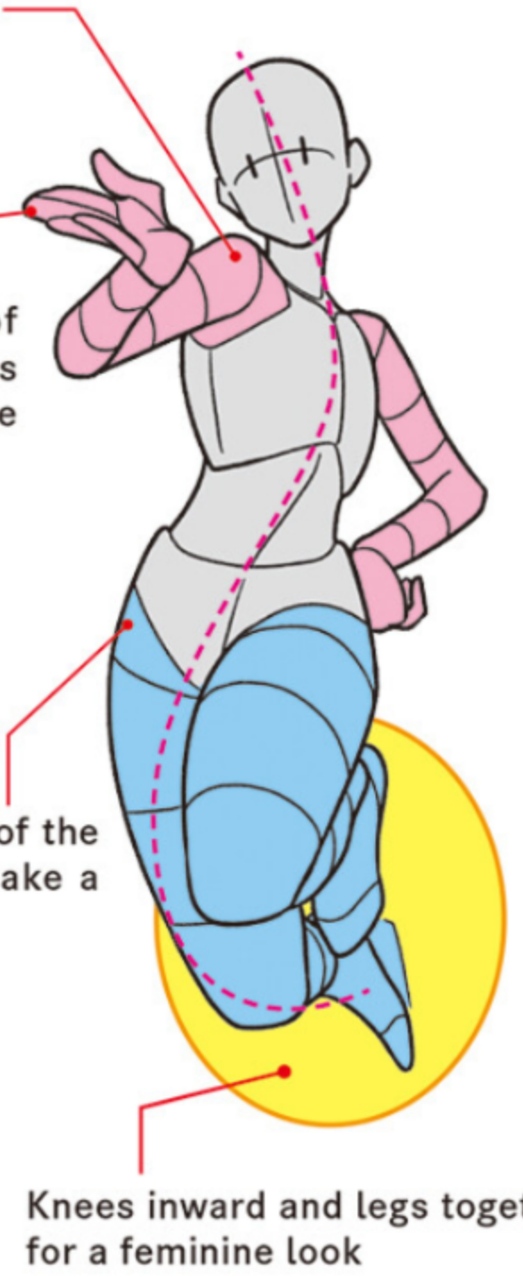


Sway body parts with the overall movement for this glamorous body

Make the hair flip up for accents, but don't flip them all or it'll look messy

Add shadows and make the cloth float for a floaty feeling

Posing the fingers along with the feminine S-shape silhouette makes the drawing look sexy



Pull shoulders closer to the face to look sexy

The expression of the hands (p.135) is important for the sexy type!

Exaggerate the tilt of the chest and hip to make a stronger S-shape

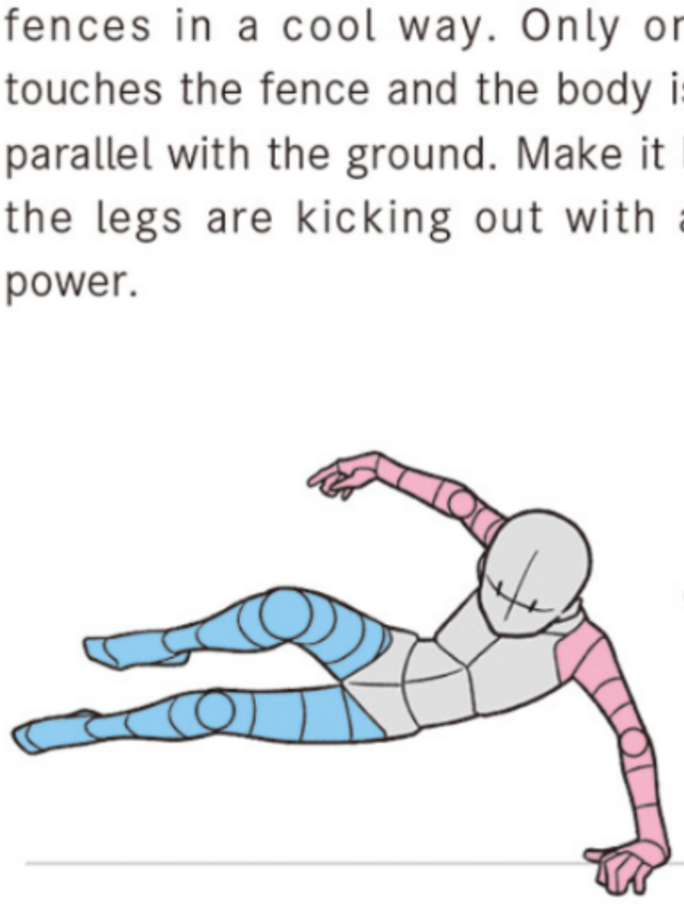
Knees inward and legs together for a feminine look

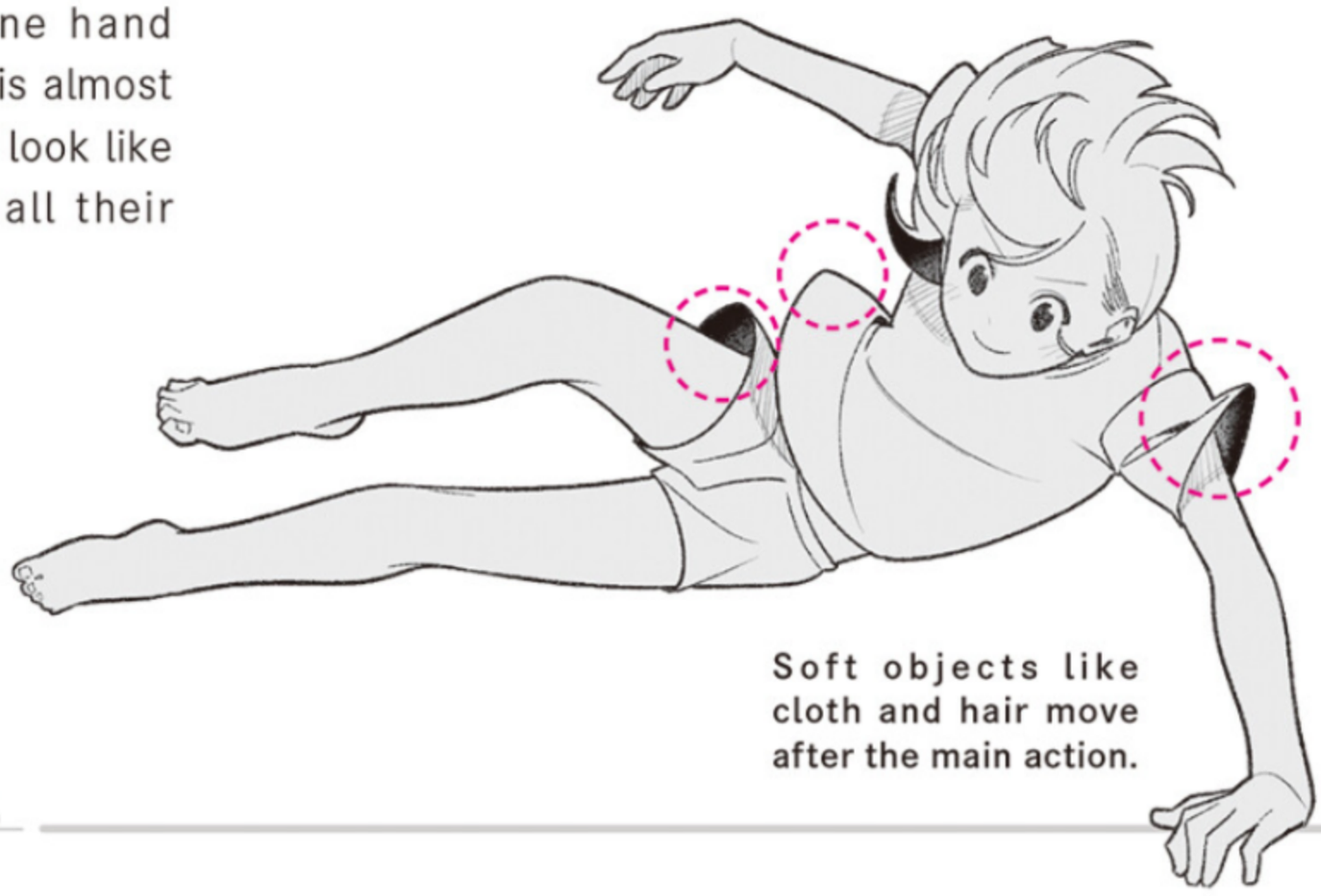
Hands make expressions too

Make expressions with hands by bending them and overlapping fingers to add depth.

Leaping over

You often see characters leaping over fences in a cool way. Only one hand touches the fence and the body is almost parallel with the ground. Make it look like the legs are kicking out with all their power.





Soft objects like cloth and hair move after the main action.

1
06

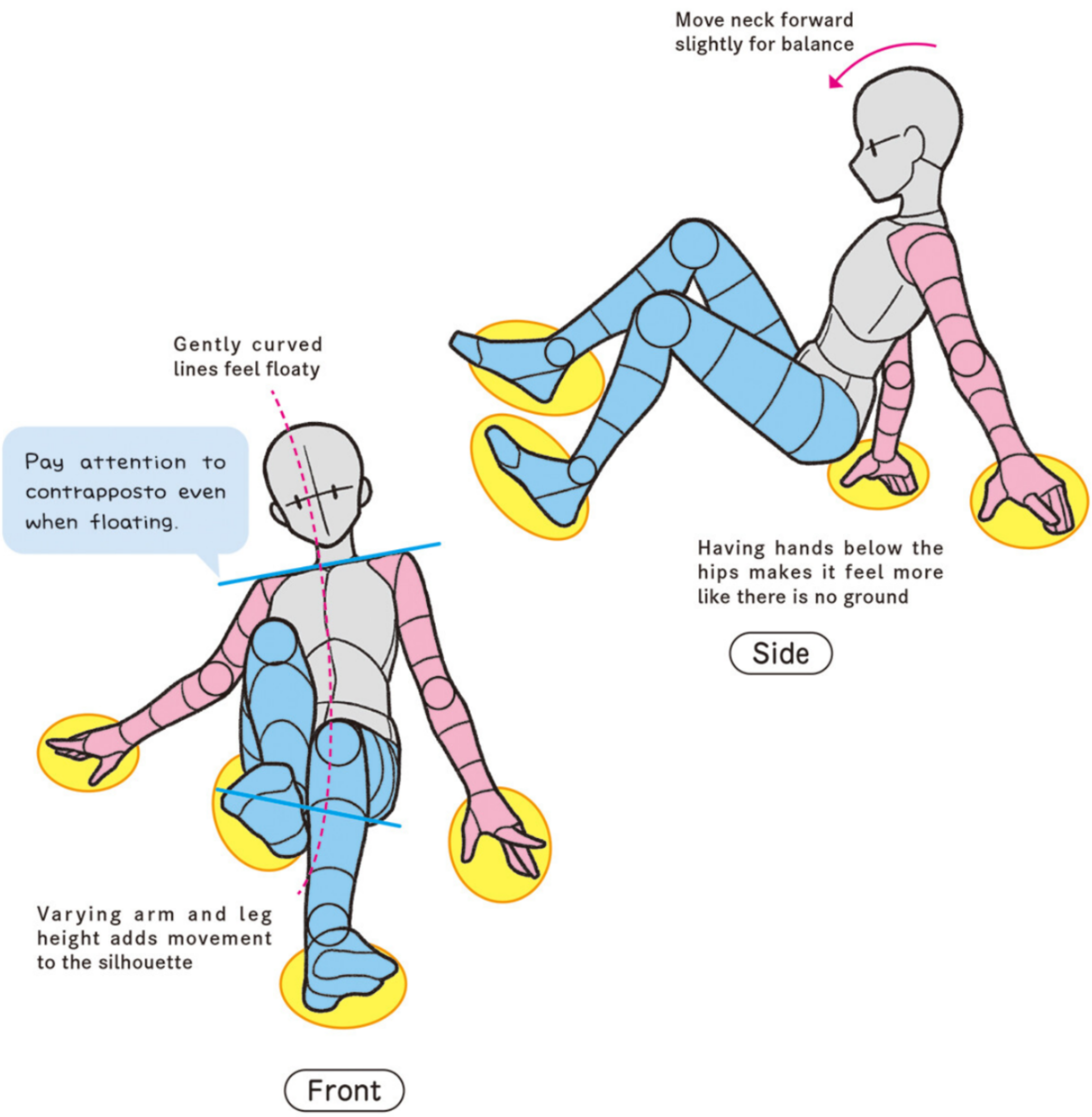
Basic Poses

Float

Floating poses let the artist ignore gravity and pose the character freely. It offers more freedom than a jumping pose, so you can emphasize the character's personality and exaggerate open and closed expressions.

Ignore Gravity

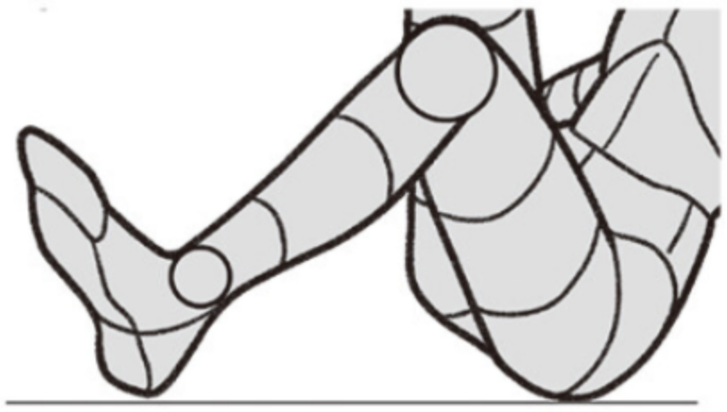
Make your unusual pose look more convincing. You have to make it look like your character is not on the ground, just like you do with the jumping pose. Relaxing the elbows and knees and stretching the body will make the pose look floatier.

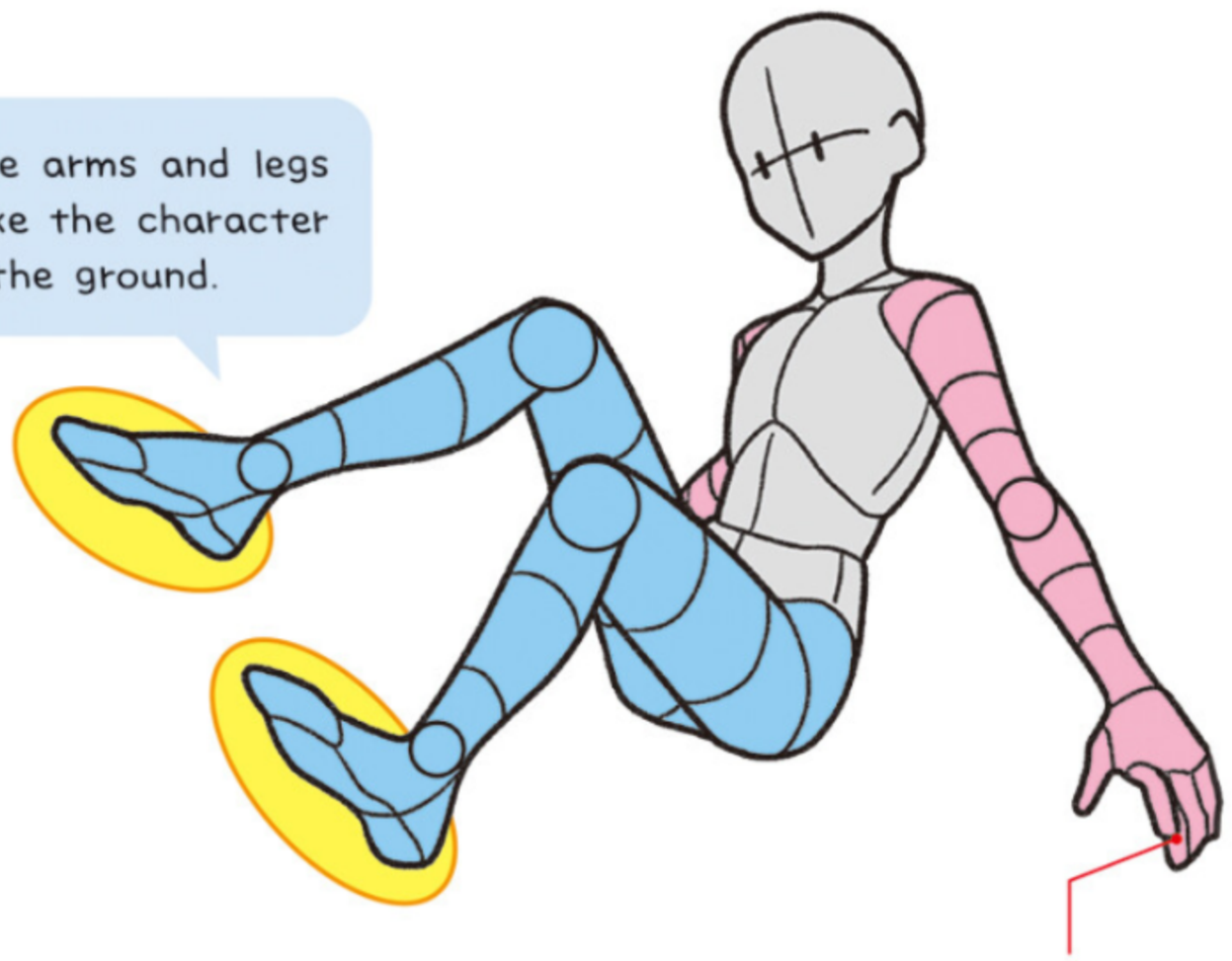


Pose Focus

Note where the feet and butt are

Here is an example where the picture is at an angle where the feet and hips are parallel. Even with the same picture, it looks more like the character is seated on the ground. Be careful that these don't line up horizontally or vertically.

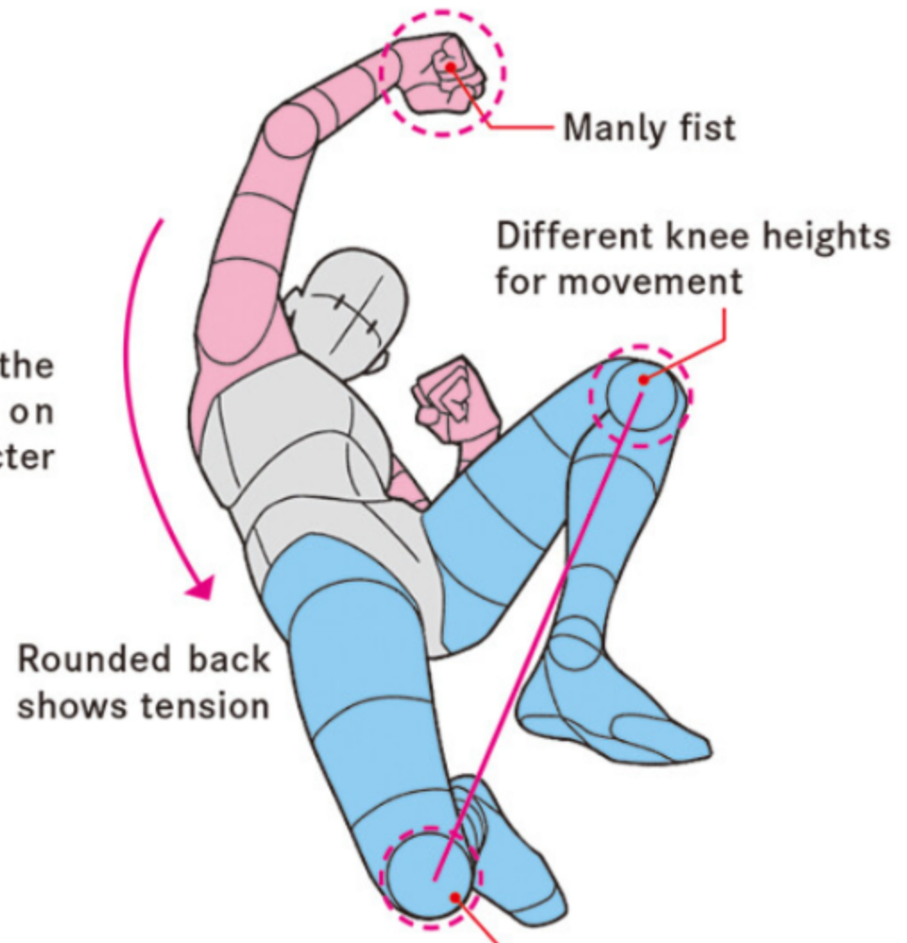




Male and Female Pose Differences

Active Type

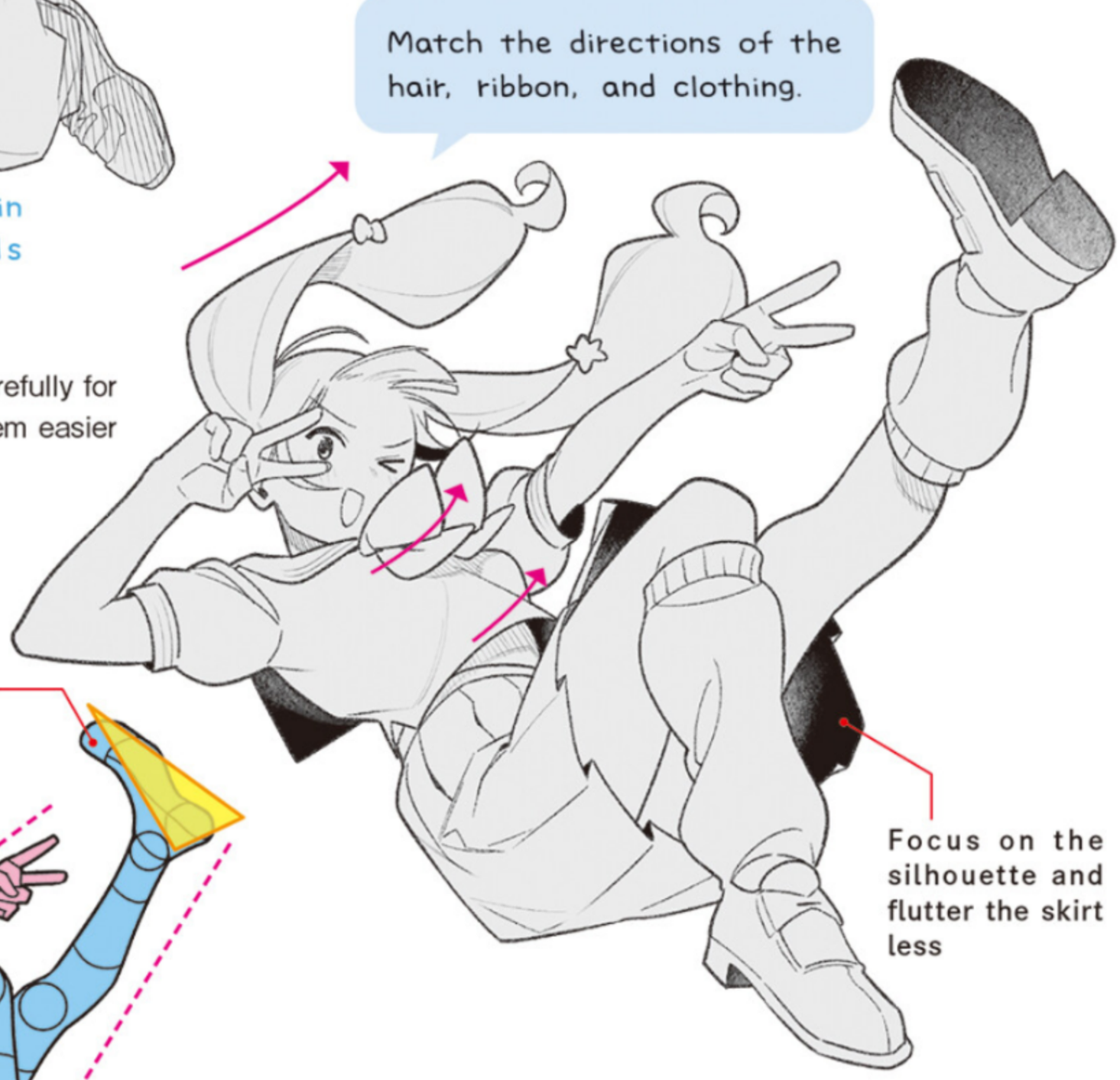
You can draw this pose freely, which lets you add individuality to different parts, like clenched fists and fingers brushing hair.



Match the directions of the hair, ribbon, and clothing.

Putting the arms and legs in different positions adds movement and feels energetic

Draw the back and front carefully for complex poses to make them easier to understand



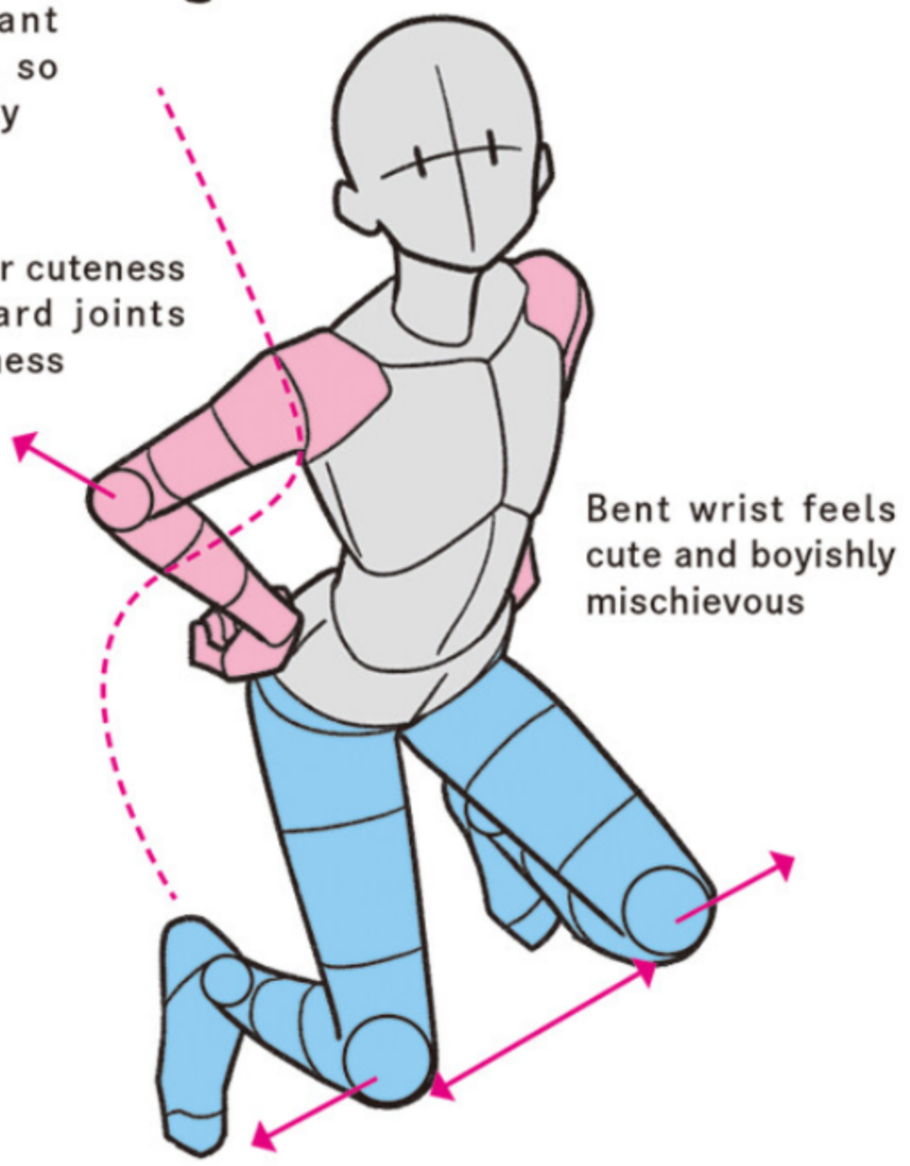
Put the knees together and use an S-shape silhouette for a more feminine pose

Cute Type

Tie shape is important since it moves easily, so here it is soft and floaty

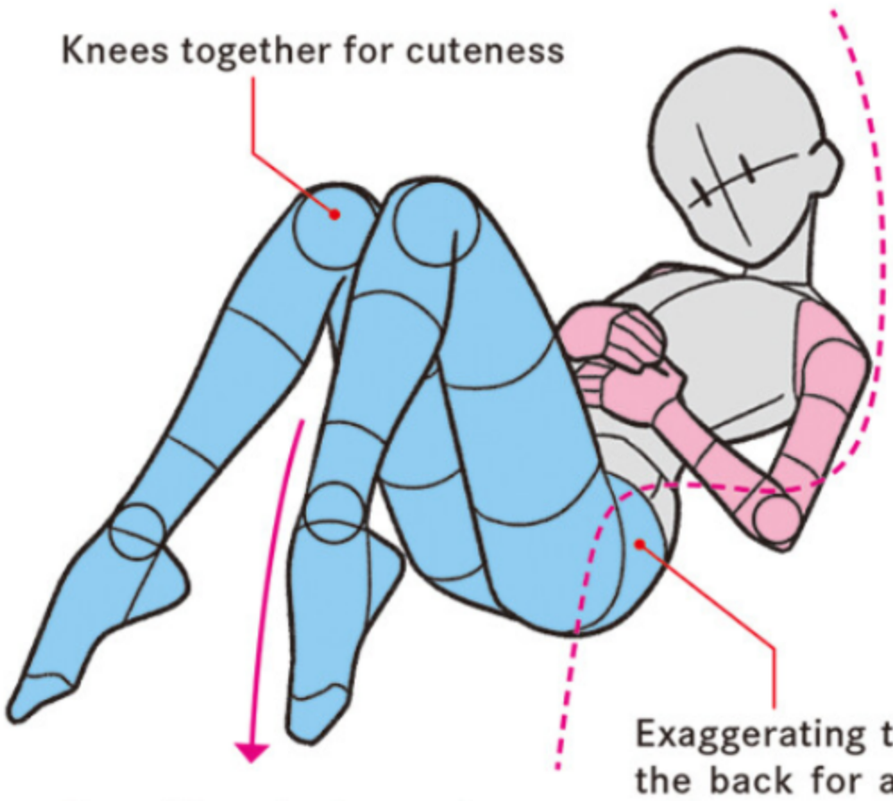
Mischievous hands on bent hips

Pay attention to negative space even when there's not much movement to keep the pose interesting



S-shape for cuteness and outward joints for boyishness

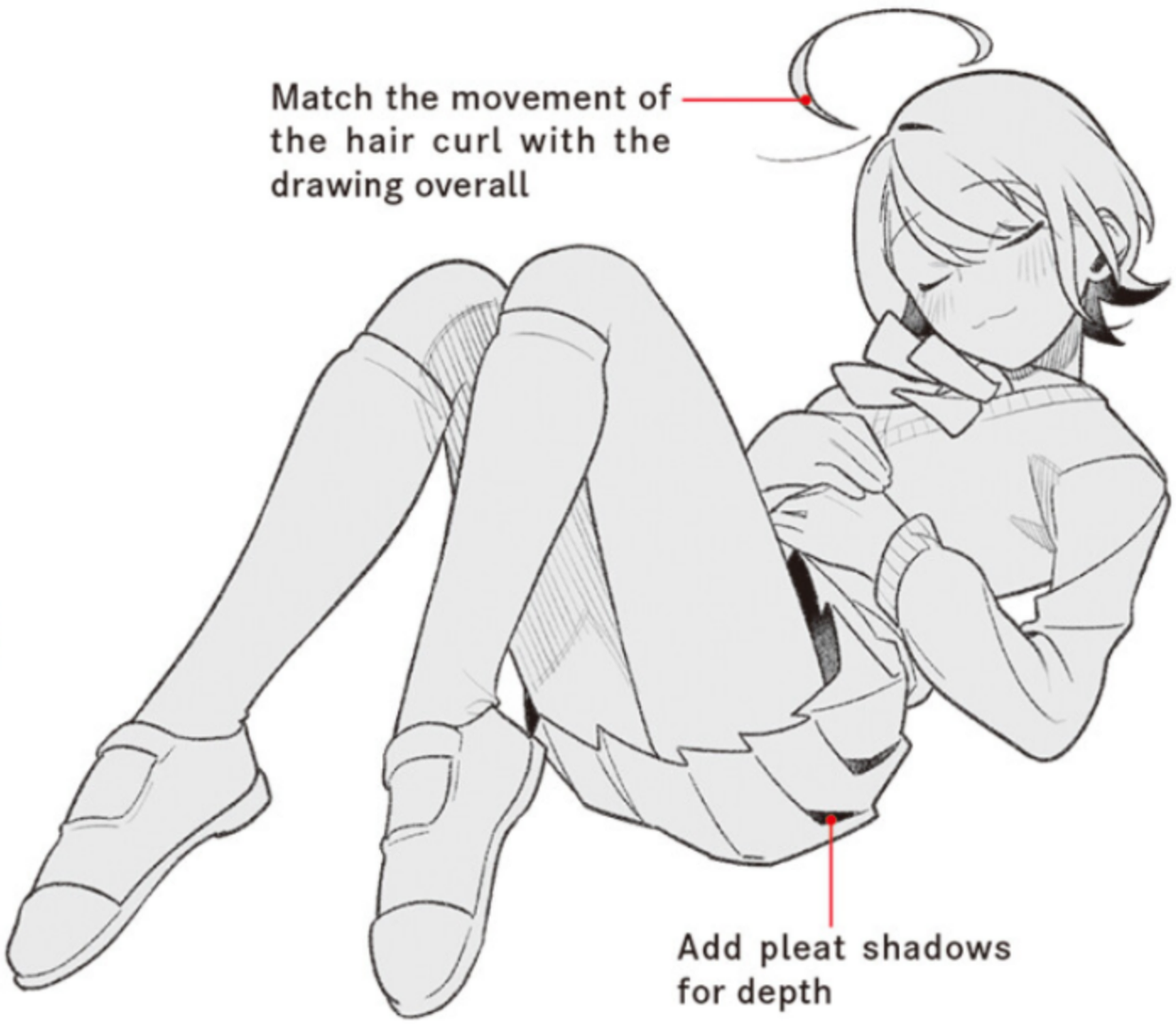
Bent wrist feels cute and boyishly mischievous



Knees together for cuteness

Stretching the leg to the toes makes the legs look longer and prettier

Exaggerating the bend in the back for an S-shape adds cuteness

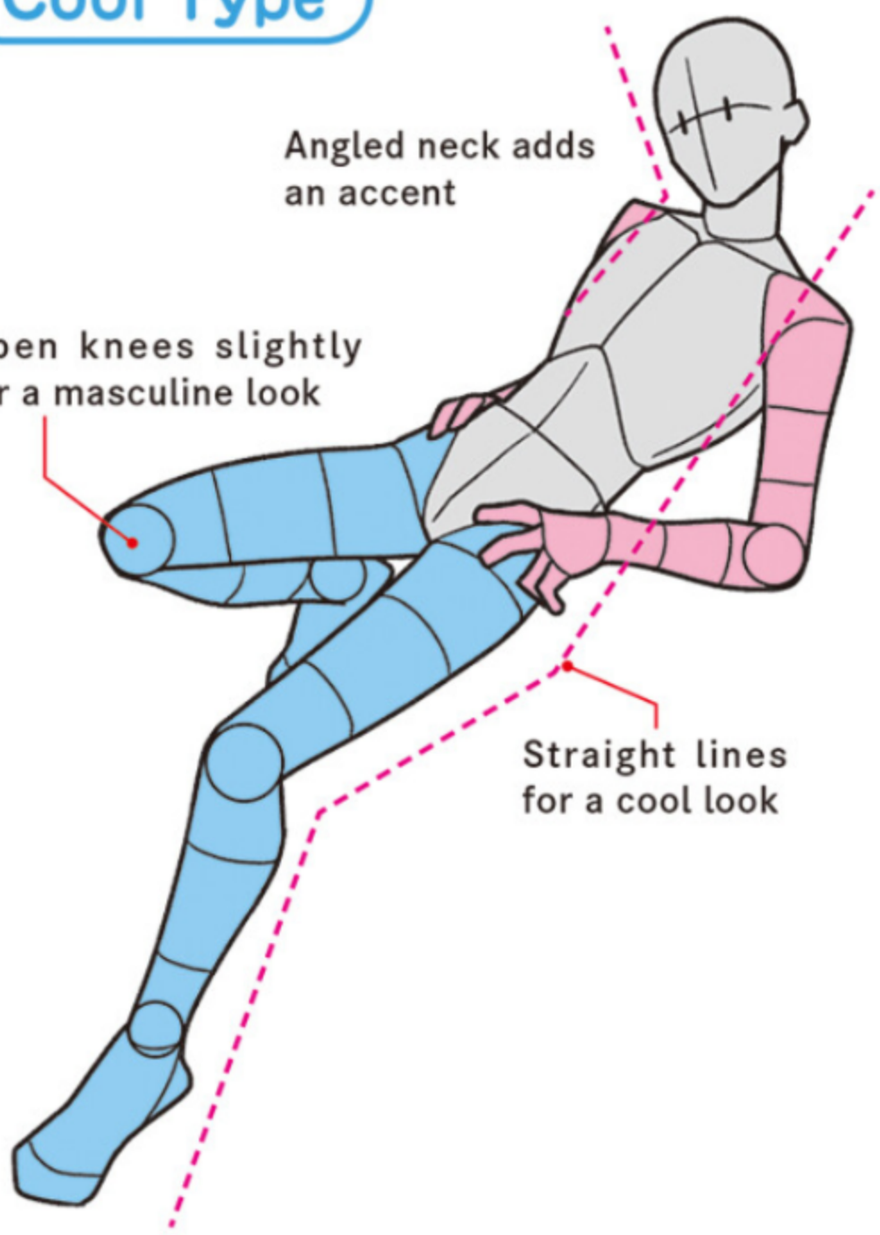


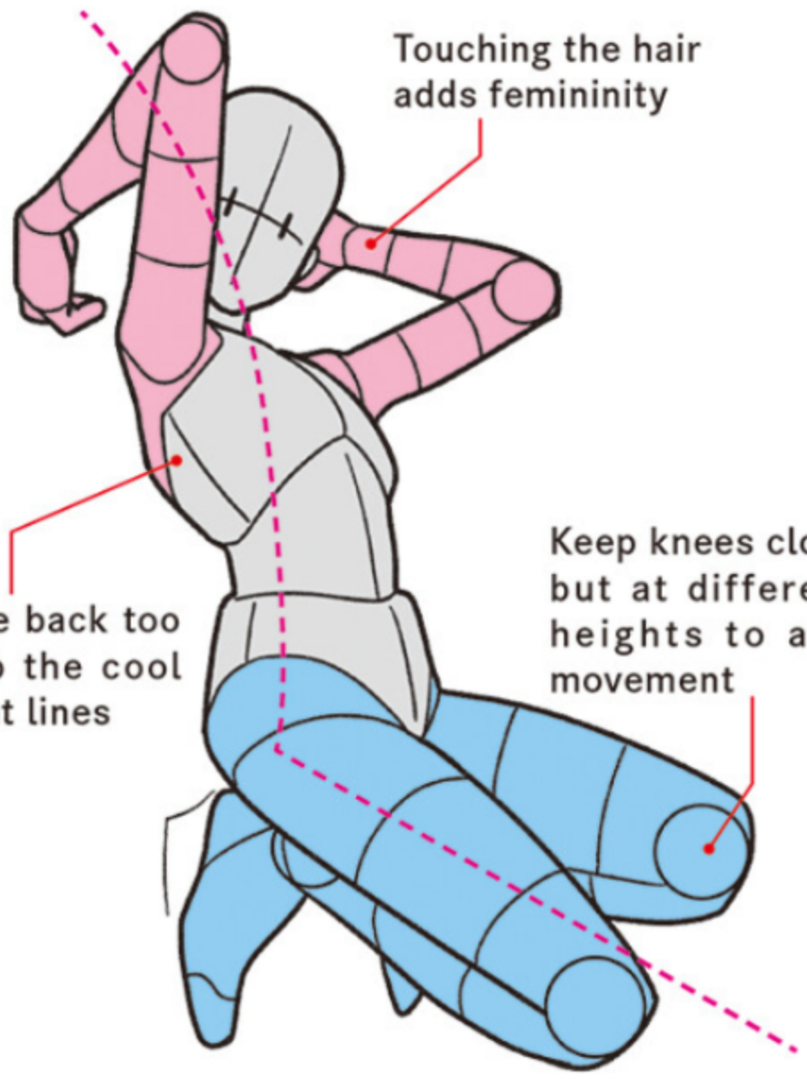
Match the movement of the hair curl with the drawing overall

Add pleat shadows for depth

Comfortably and gracefully floating

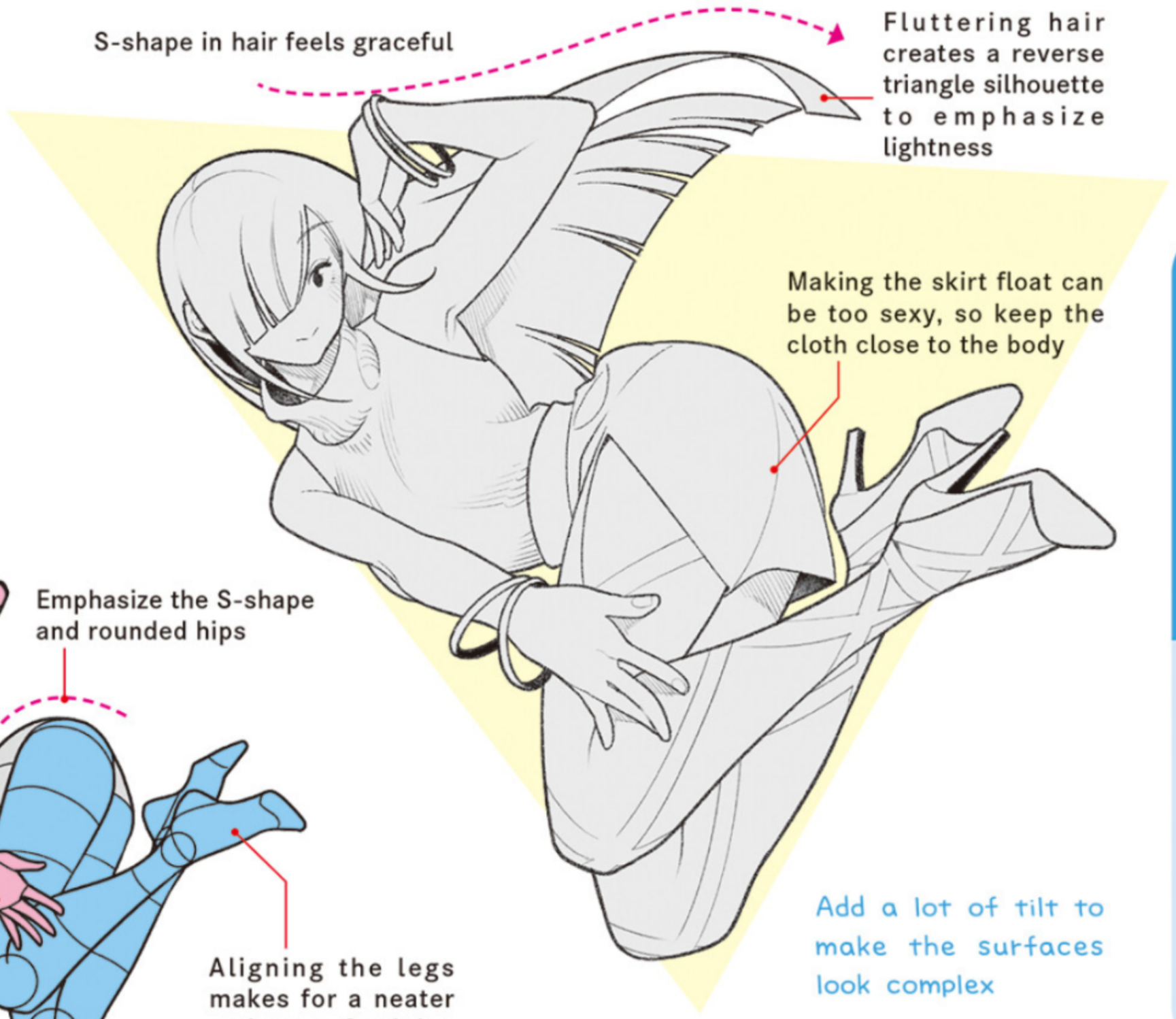
Cool Type

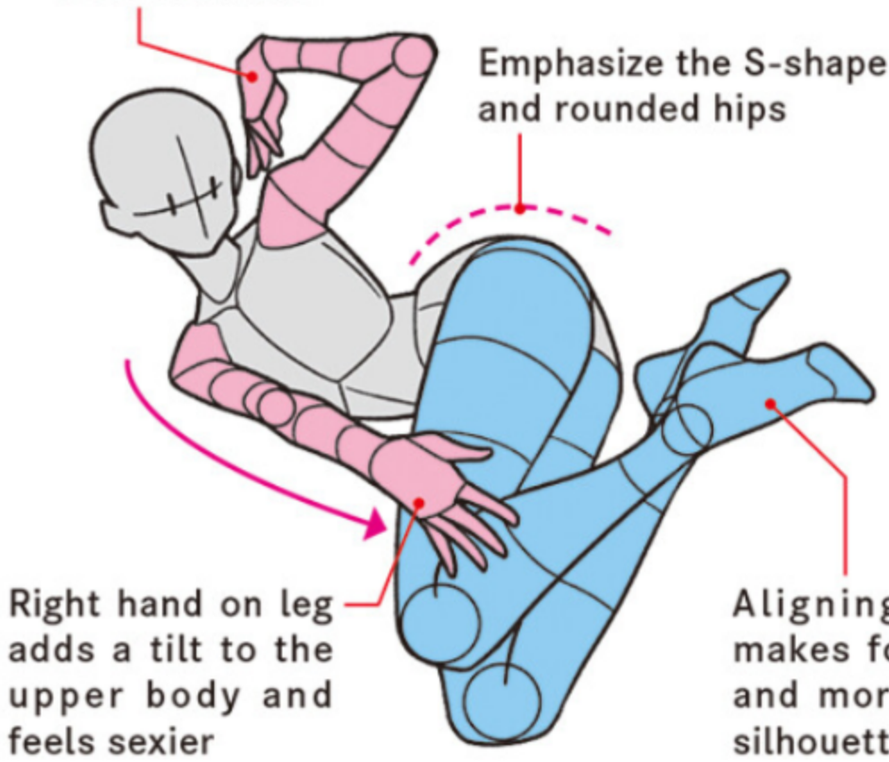




Keep straight lines in mind while raising the arms and bending the back for a feminine look

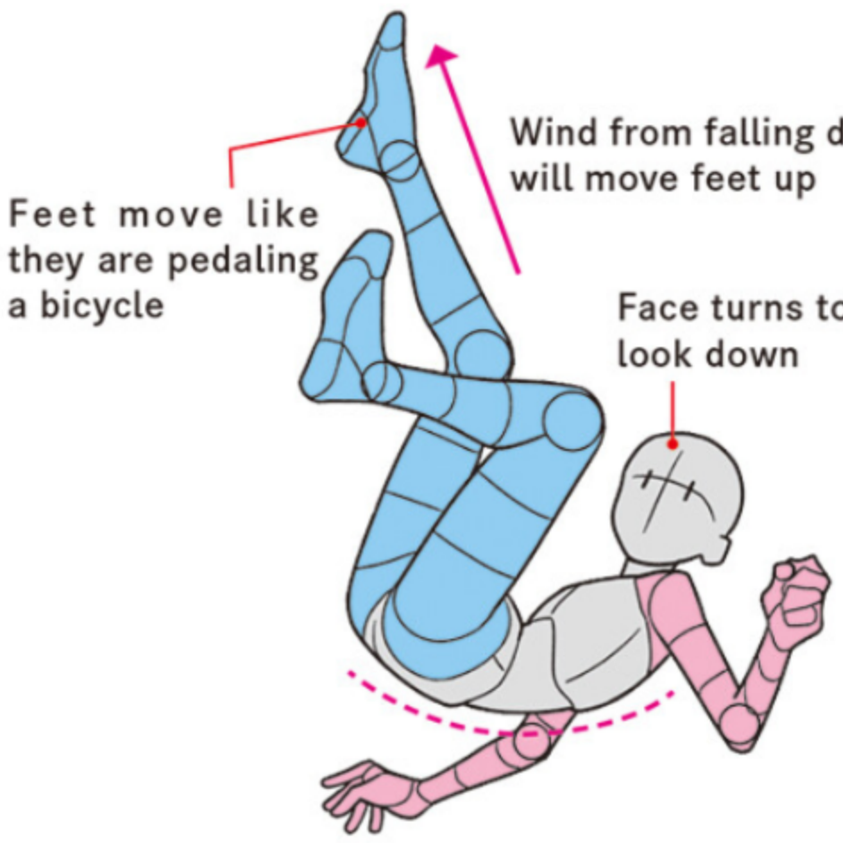
Sexy Type

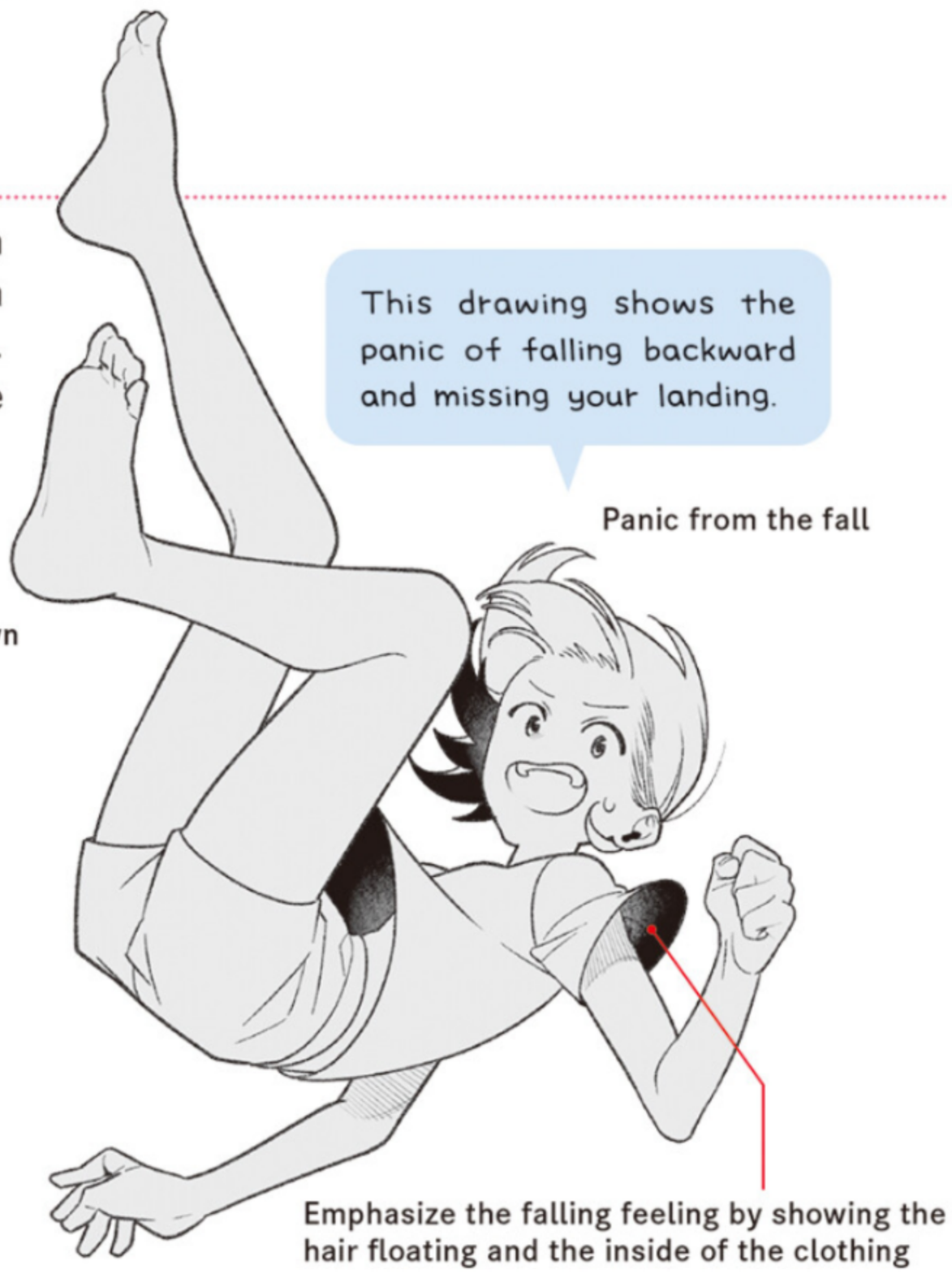




Fall down

In this pose, the body floats even though the character does not intend to. It is a good way to show a character's personality. Maybe they look anxious about the situation, or maybe they are relaxed.





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07

Basic Poses

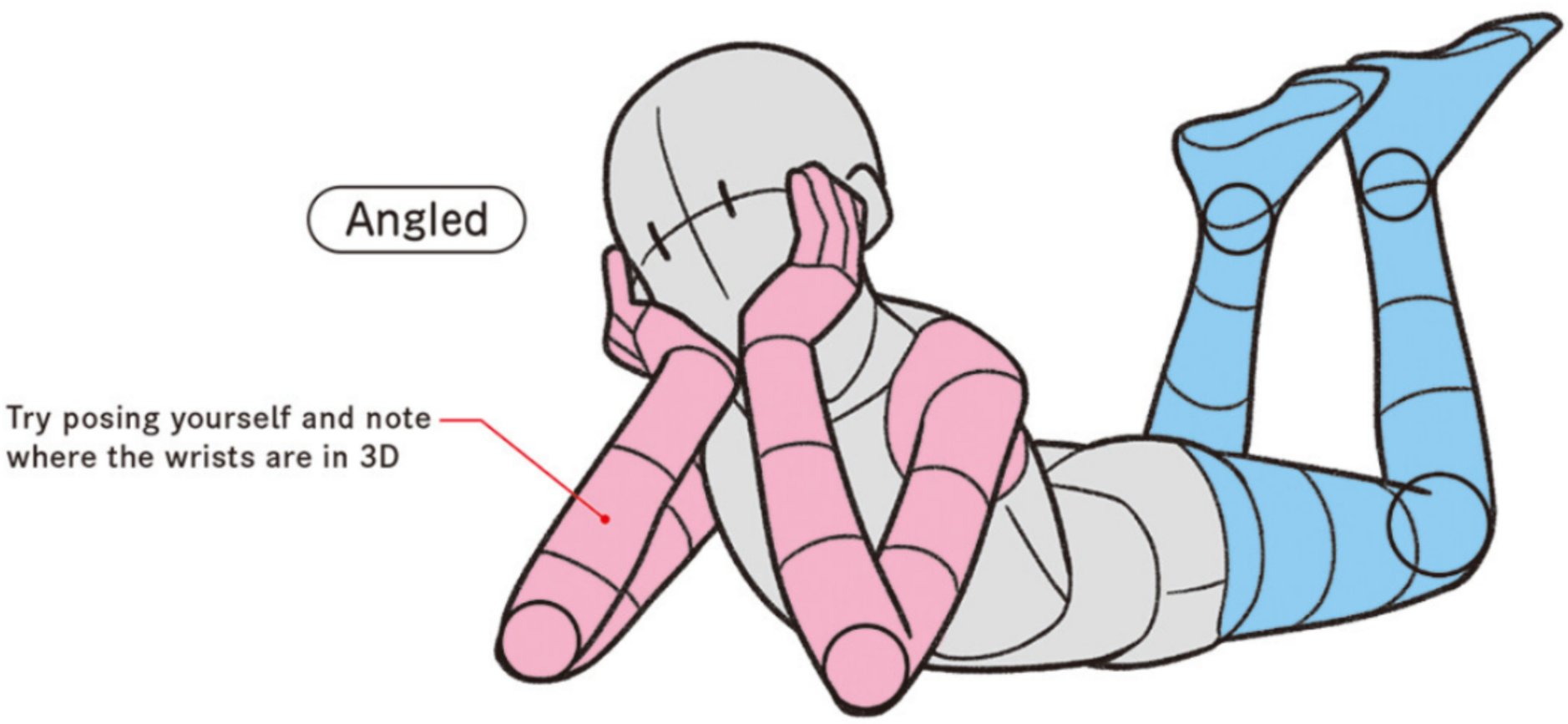
Lie Down

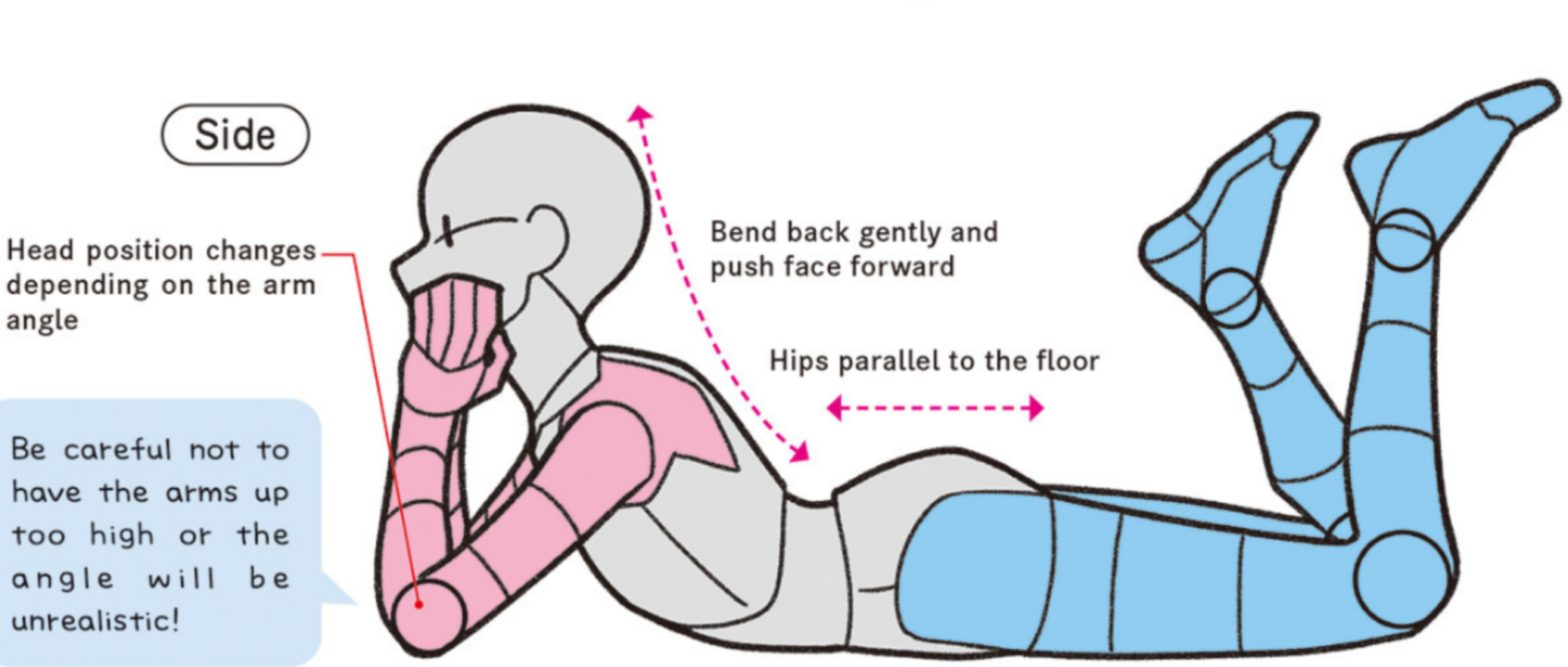
This pose has the character lying down with the whole body close to the ground. It is hard to draw the body near the ground, but there is less focus on the center of gravity since the weight is spread between the arms and legs. We'll start with a face-down pose.

Be Aware of the Ground

The body, arms, and legs might be on the ground, or they might not. Note which parts of the body touch the ground and which don't for each character. Make sure the surfaces touching the ground like the elbows and hips are at the same height.

At Different Angles



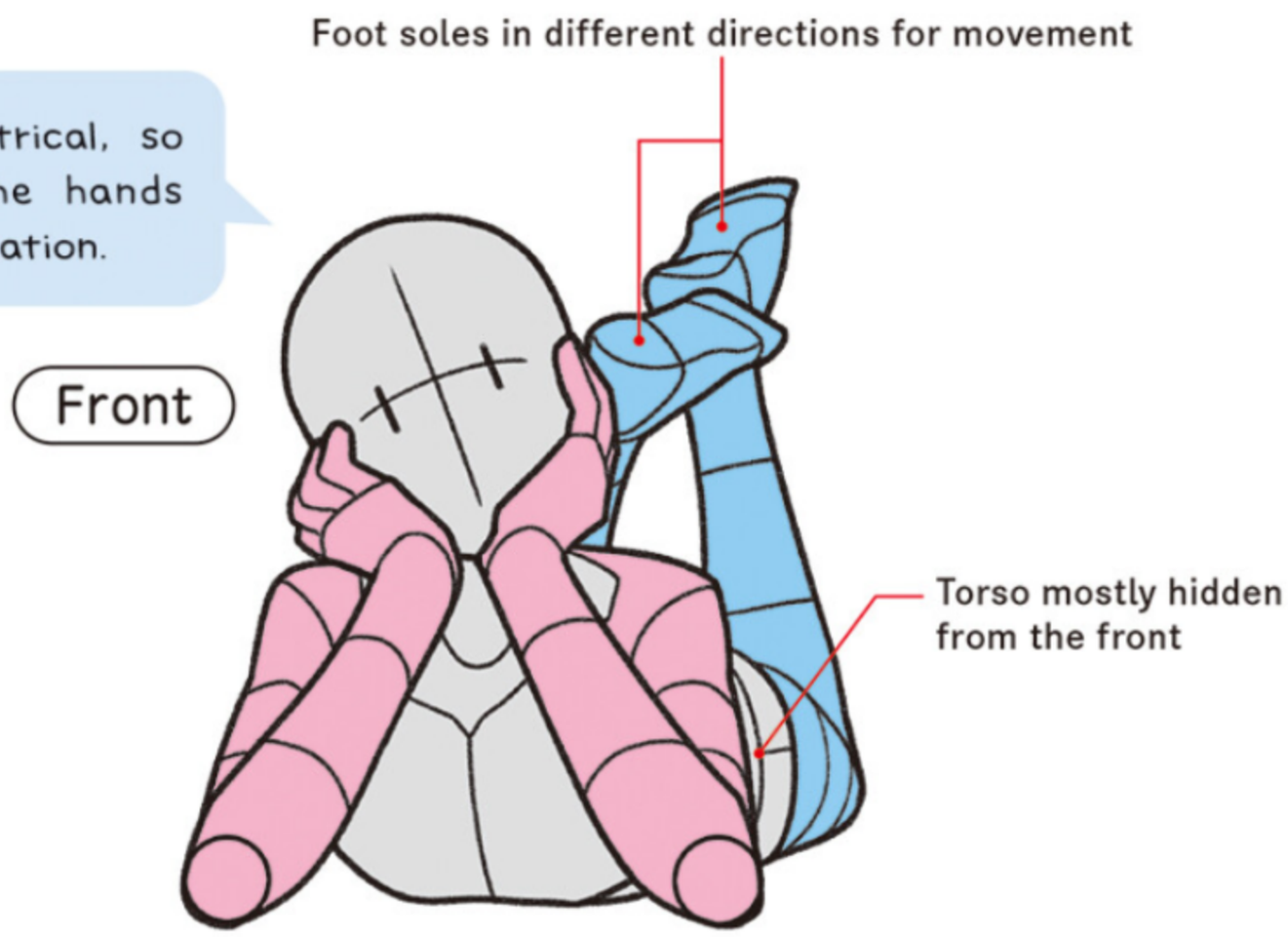


Pose Focus

Presence of the ground

Surfaces touching the ground should be flat. Adding to much dimension will make it hard to feel the presence of the ground.

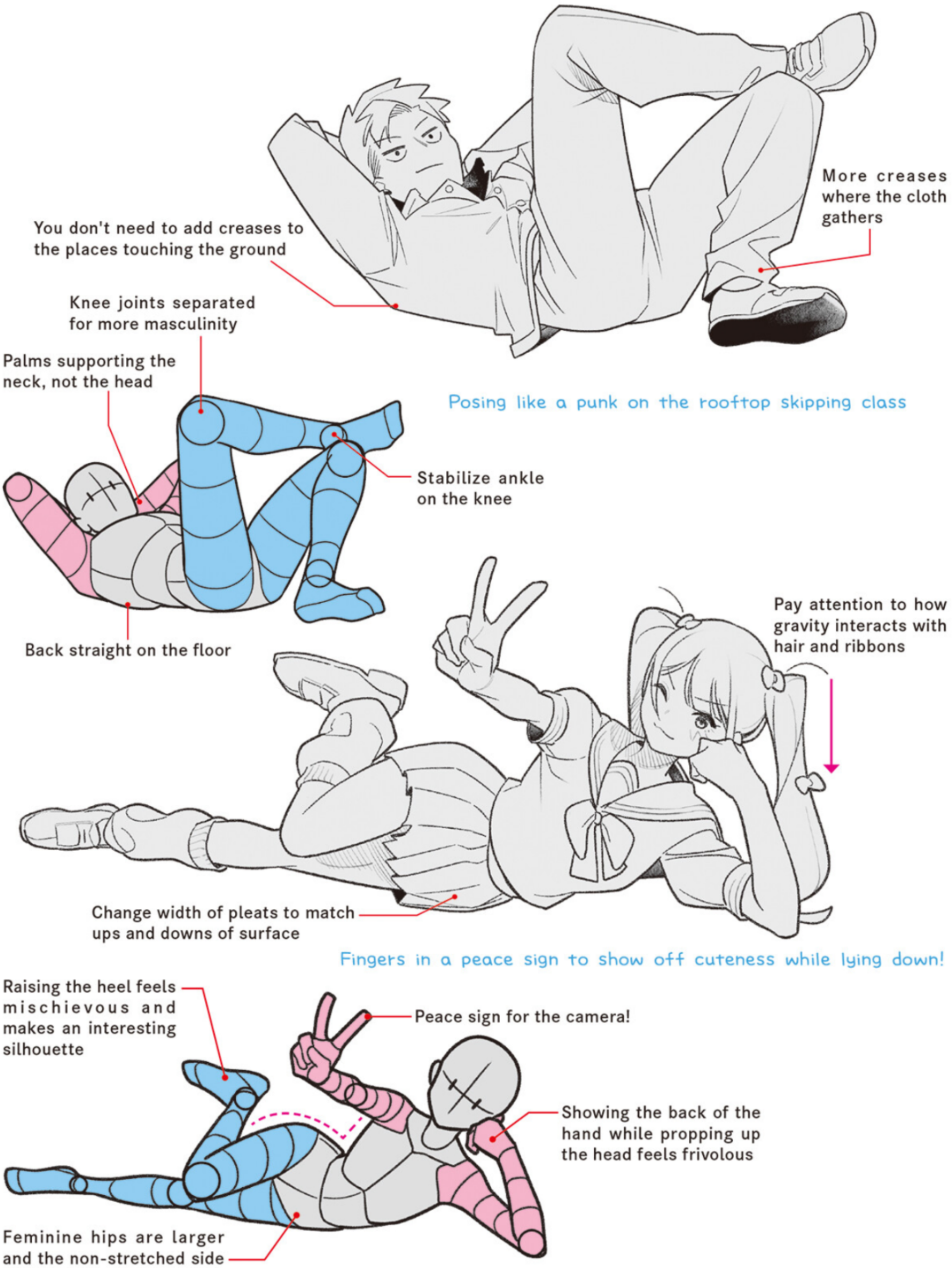
The pose looks symmetrical, so add expression to the hands for more visual information.



Male and Female Pose Differences

Active Type

Take a look at this pose from different personalities. The feel of the lying-down pose changes just from whether it is facing up or down.



Posing like a punk on the rooftop skipping class

Fingers in a peace sign to show off cuteness while lying down!

Cool Type

Put weight on the arms and hold the body at an angle for a composed look

Add creases to straight slacks to keep them from looking boring

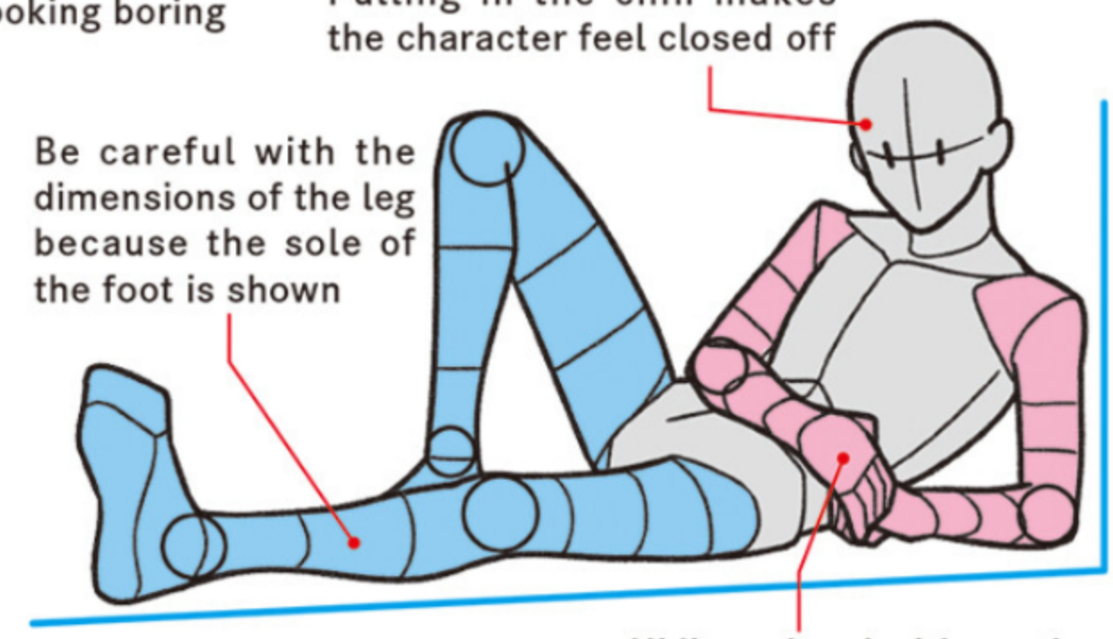
Where to add shadows

The elbow touches the hip, but the wrist floats above it, so the shadow grows larger in that direction.

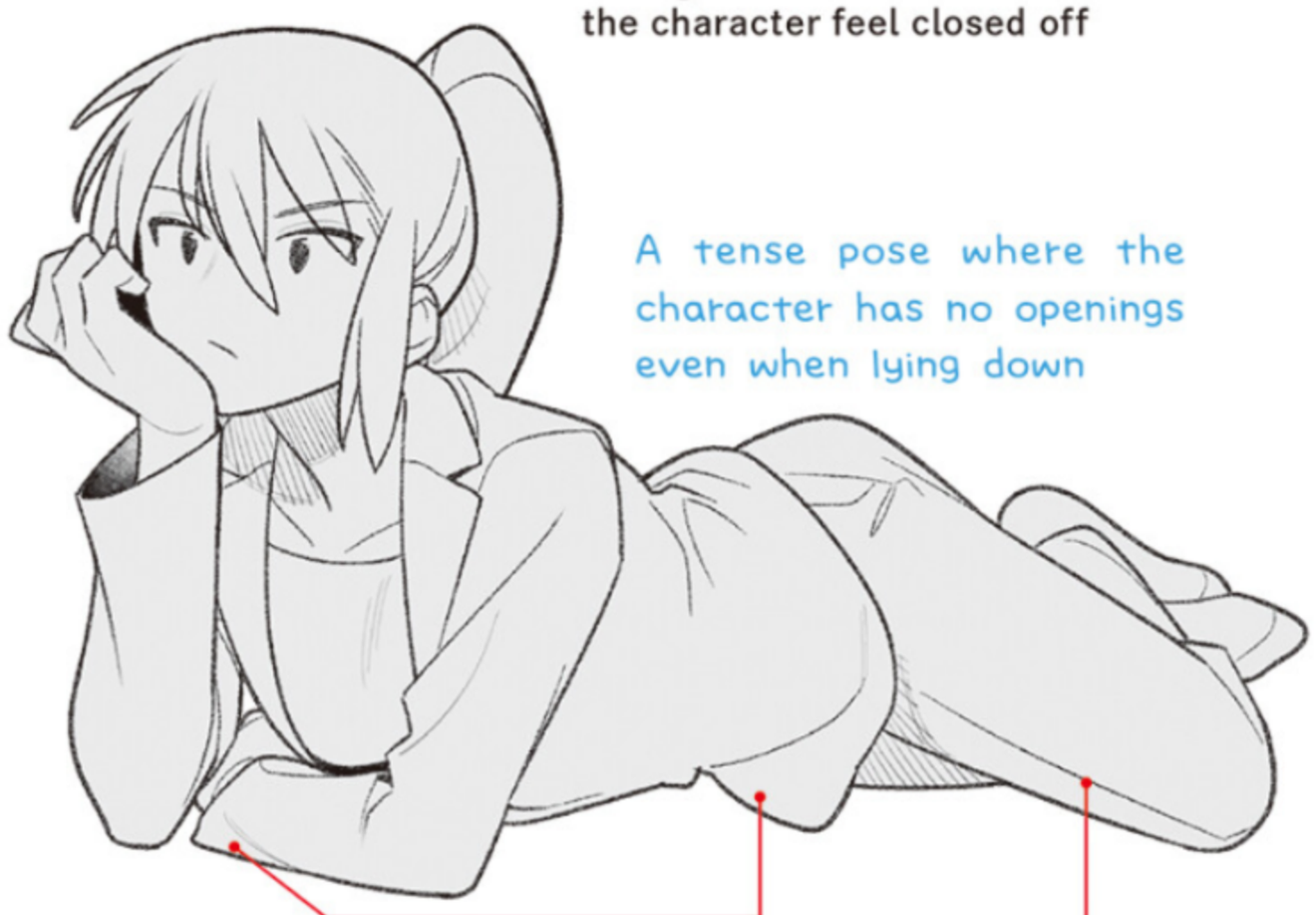
Pulling in the chin makes the character feel closed off

Be careful with the dimensions of the leg because the sole of the foot is shown

Straight lines look cool



Hiding a hand with another hand makes the character feel closed off



A tense pose where the character has no openings even when lying down

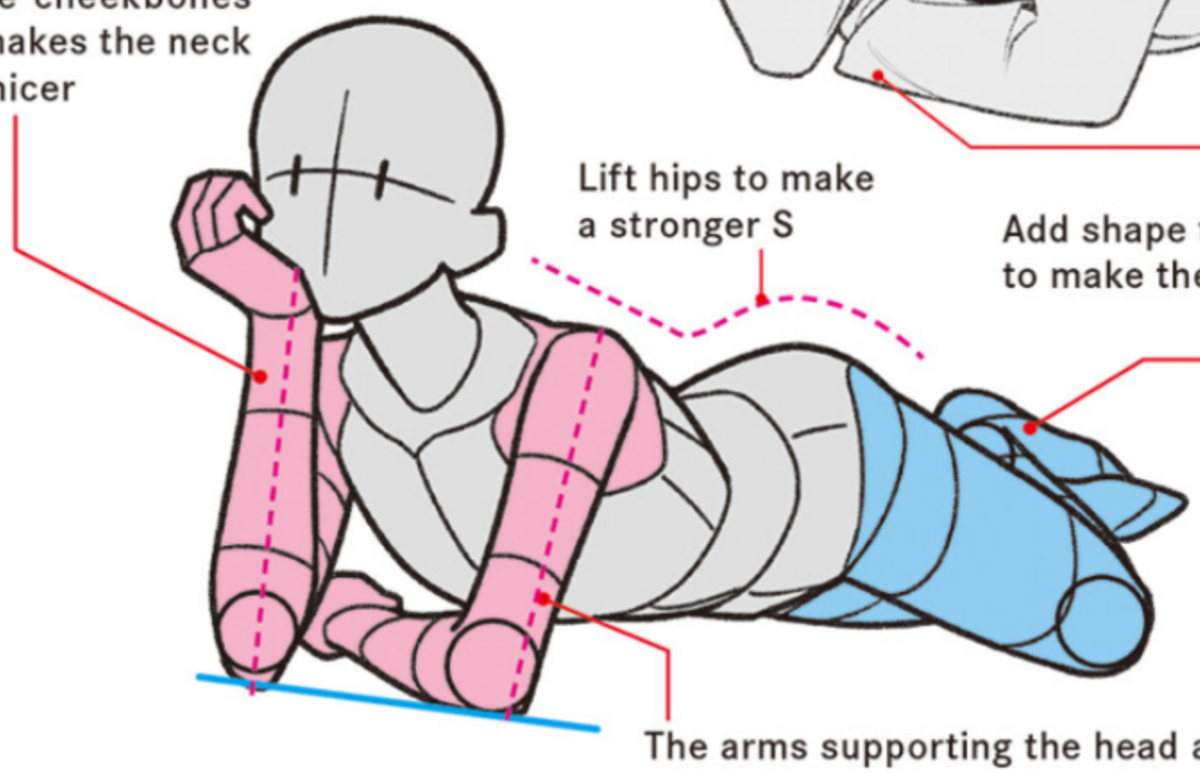
Propping the head on the arms pushes up the cheekbones and makes the neck look nicer

Lift hips to make a stronger S

Add shape to the hem and sleeves to make the silhouette interesting

Add straight lines on the slacks to show the direction of the legs

Legs together for a feminine look



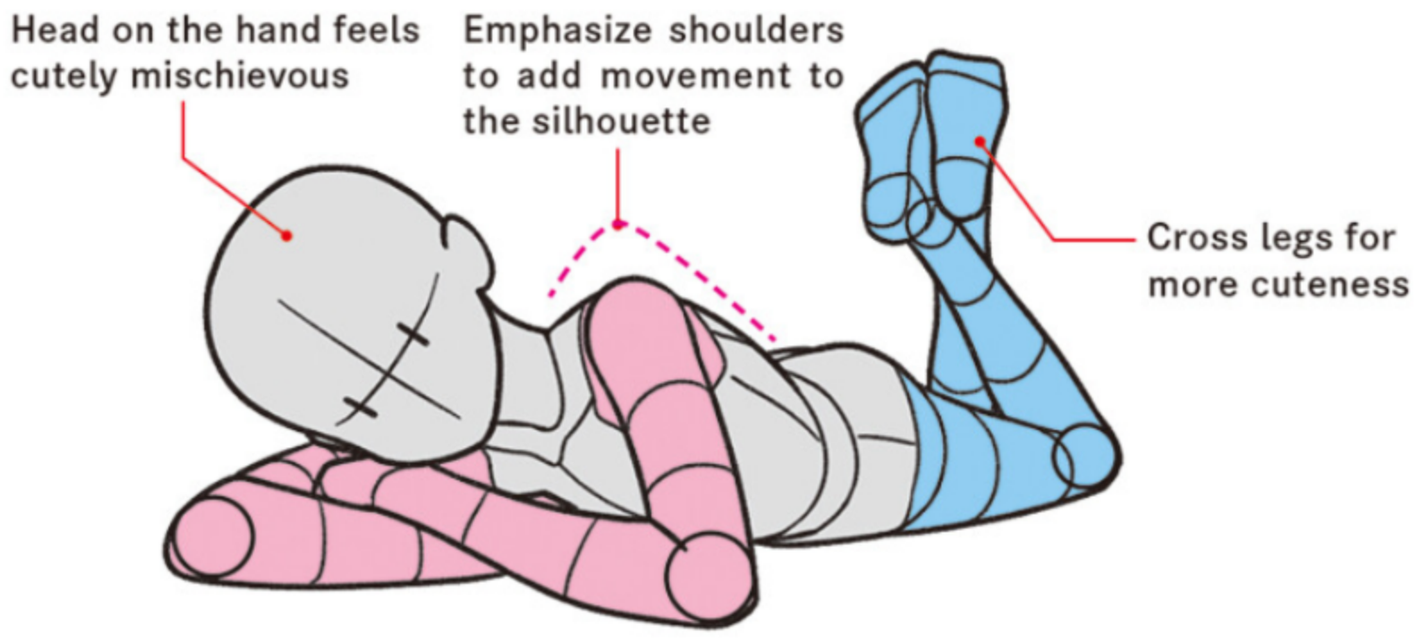
The arms supporting the head and body should form straight lines

Cute Type

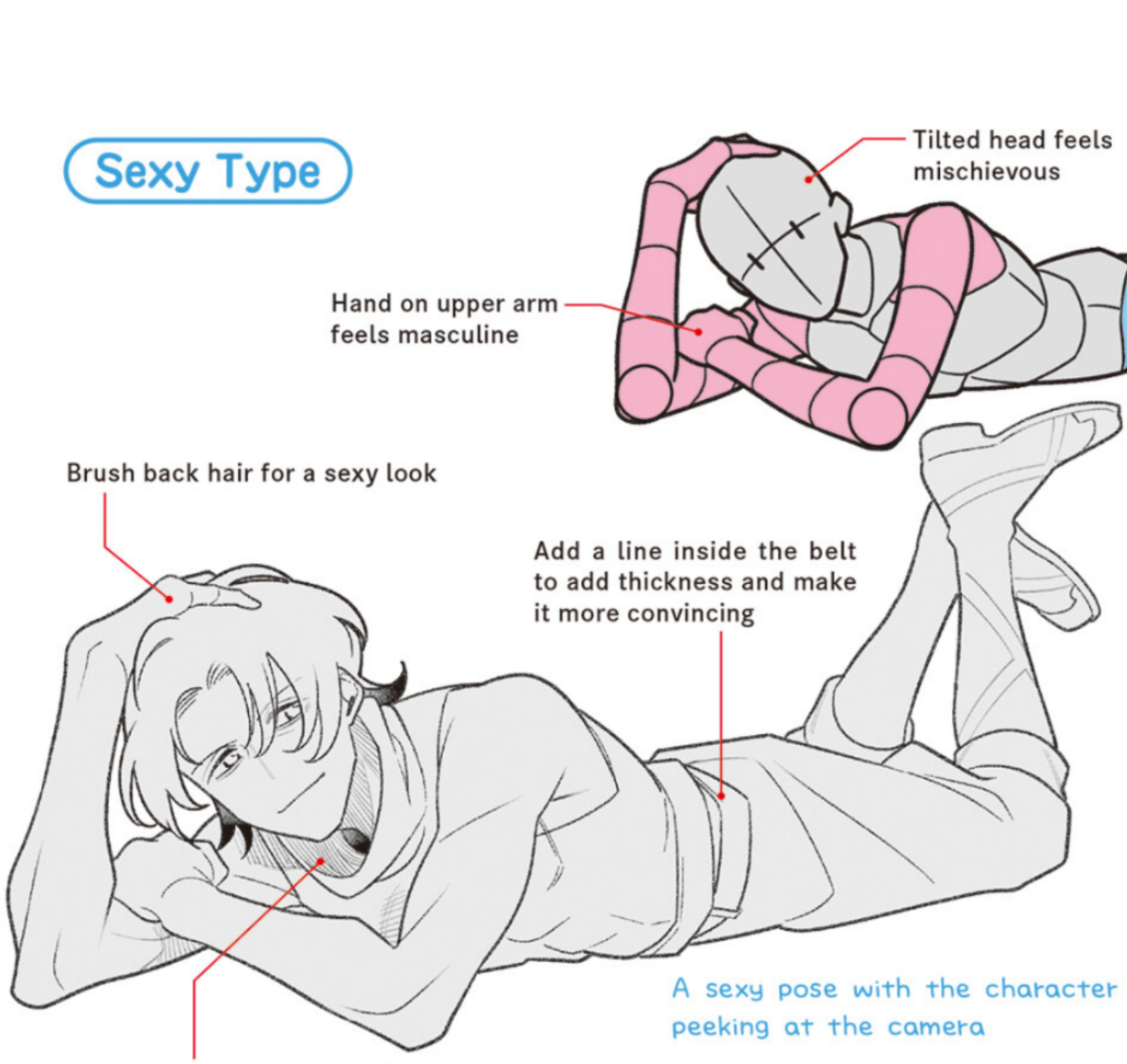
How the bangs look

In the drawing on the right, the bangs are drawn without regard to gravity to emphasize the character's personality.

This is how it would look with gravity

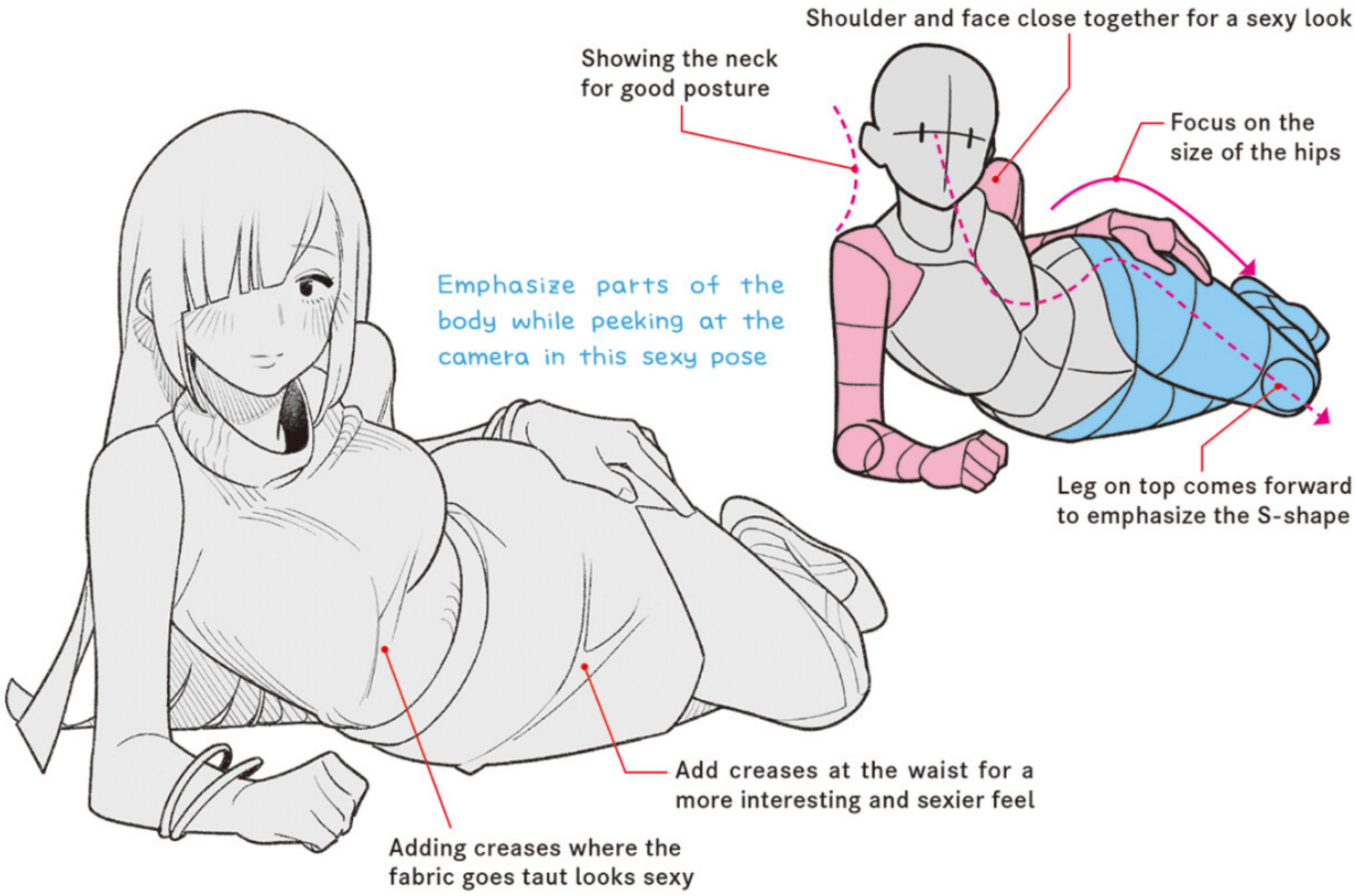


Sexy Type



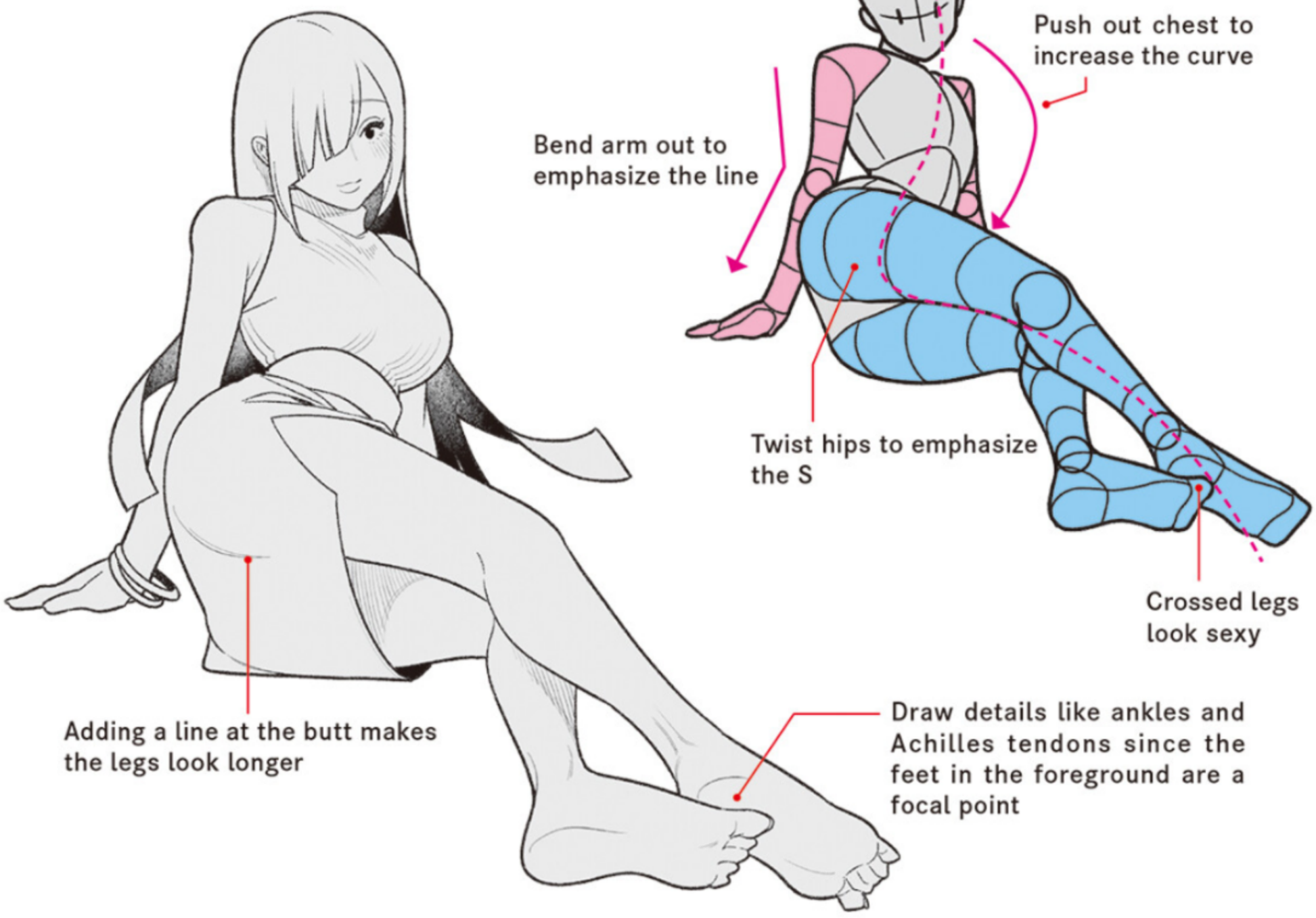
Details in the arms

Draw lines in the elbows and wrists for a more masculine look!



Get up

When getting up, the upper body comes off the ground. Show the character's personality through how the upper and lower body tilt!



Column

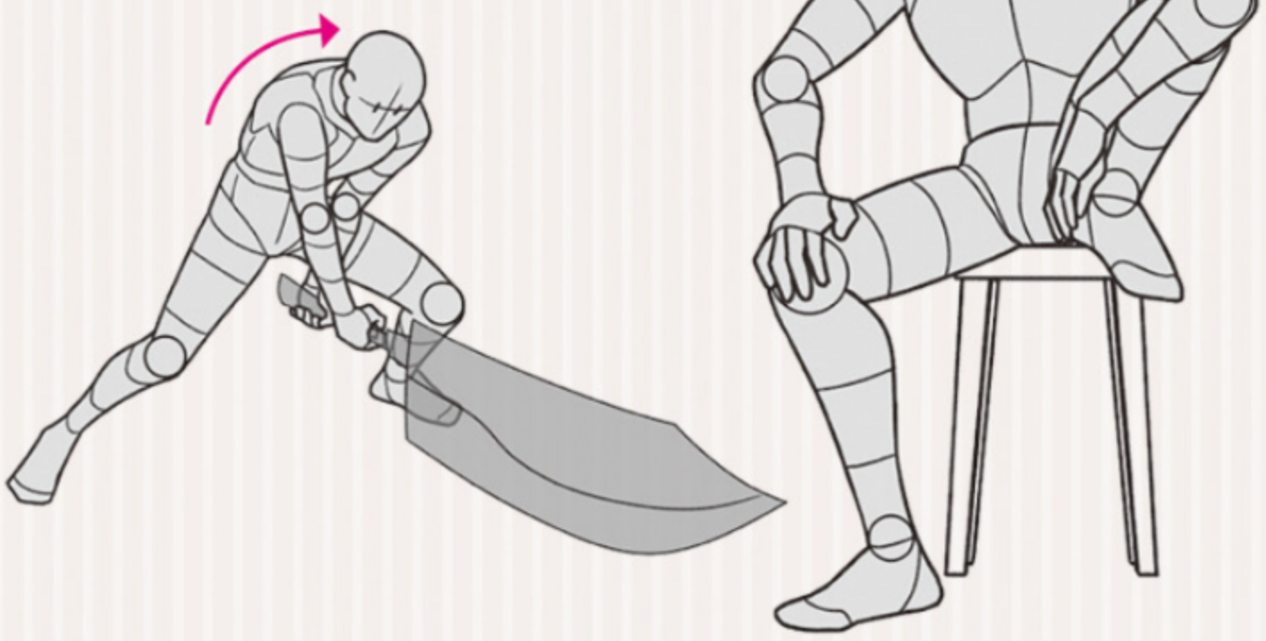
Express with Posture

A straight back feels serious. A rounded one feels depressed or tense. Posture can express a character's feelings and personality. Look at how a drawing changes depending on how the back is bent. Even if the expression is the same, the pose can change the feel entirely.

Round Back

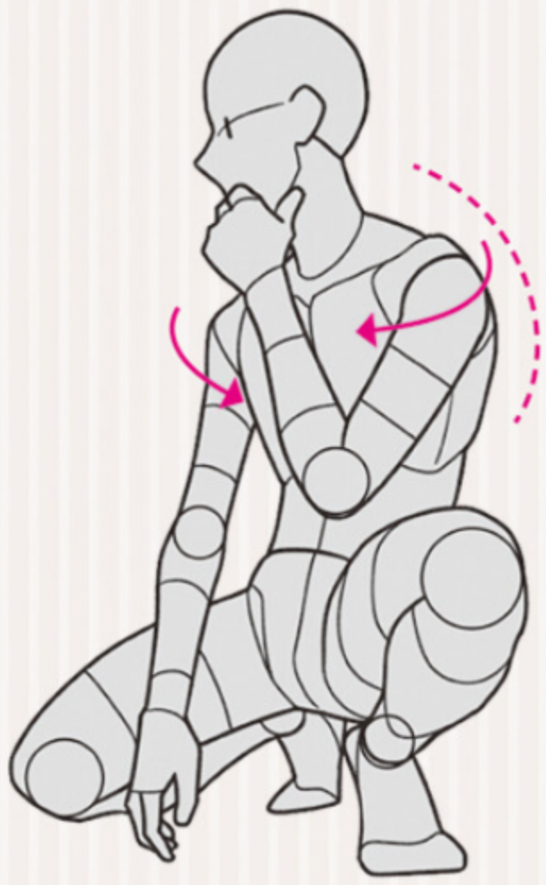
Round the back on purpose

Strength focused toward the front of the body, expressing physical and mental strength



Stoop

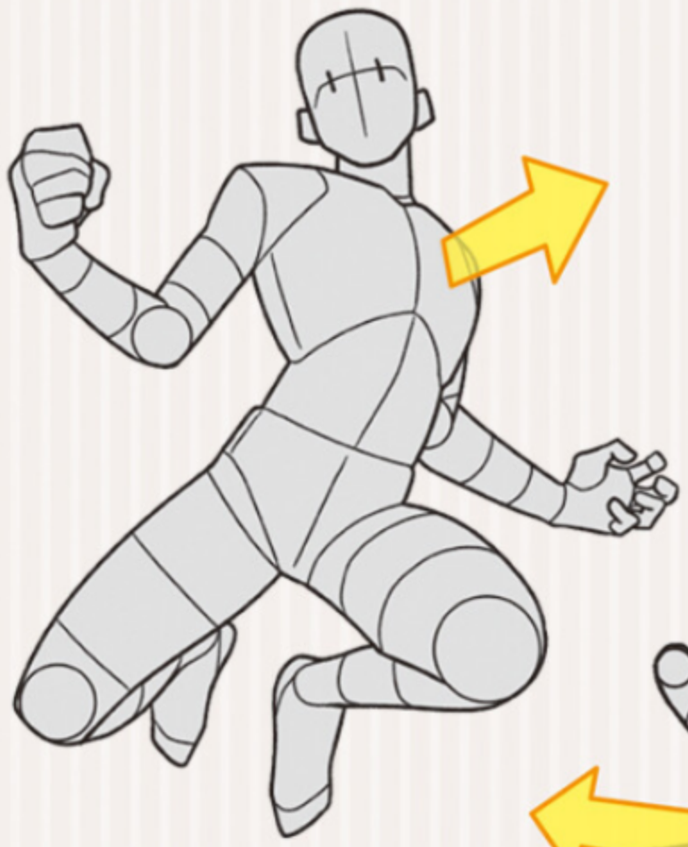
Hunched shoulders cause this round back, and the character looks relaxed



Bent Back

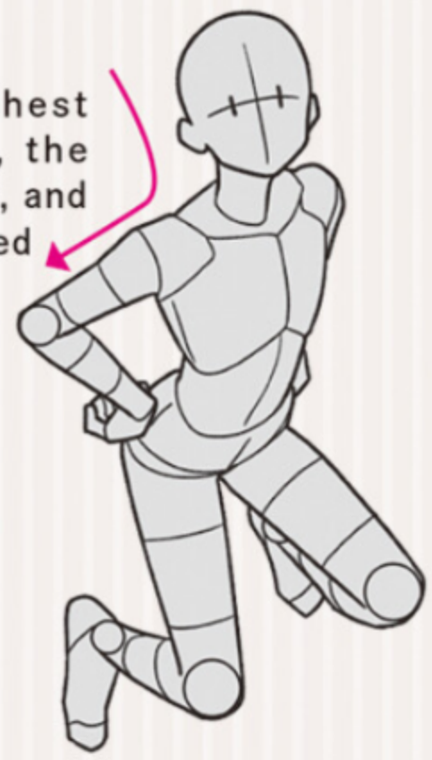
Chest pushed out

Shoulders open and the upper body feels strong in this imposing pose



Waist bent

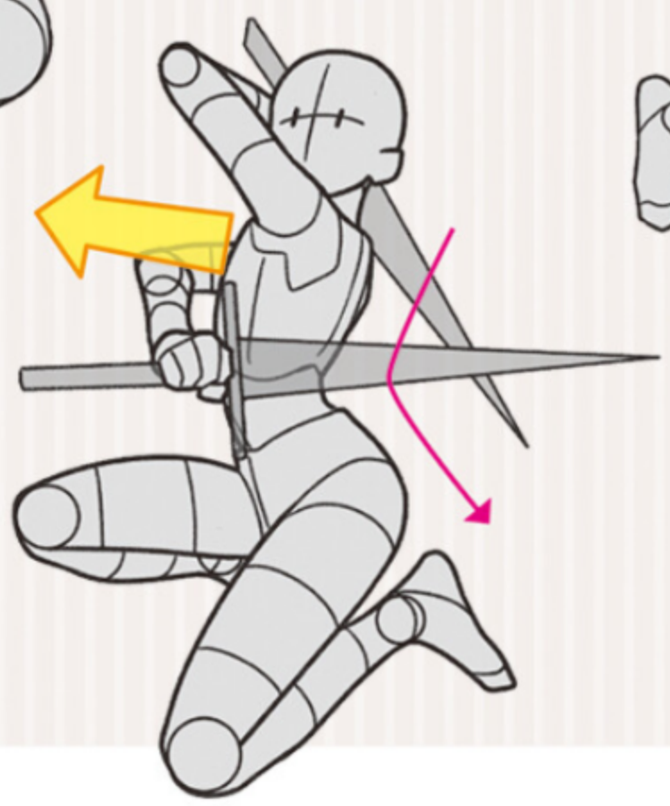
Rather than the chest being pushed out, the hips are thrust back, and the pose feels relaxed



Combined

Chest out, waist back

The pose has strength in it, but the waist is bent back for a more interesting silhouette, combining different expressions



Chapter

2

Action Poses

This chapter focuses on combat poses like punching, kicking, and holding weapons. We'll also look at action-related poses like receiving damage and magic effects.

Chapter 2

08

Action Poses

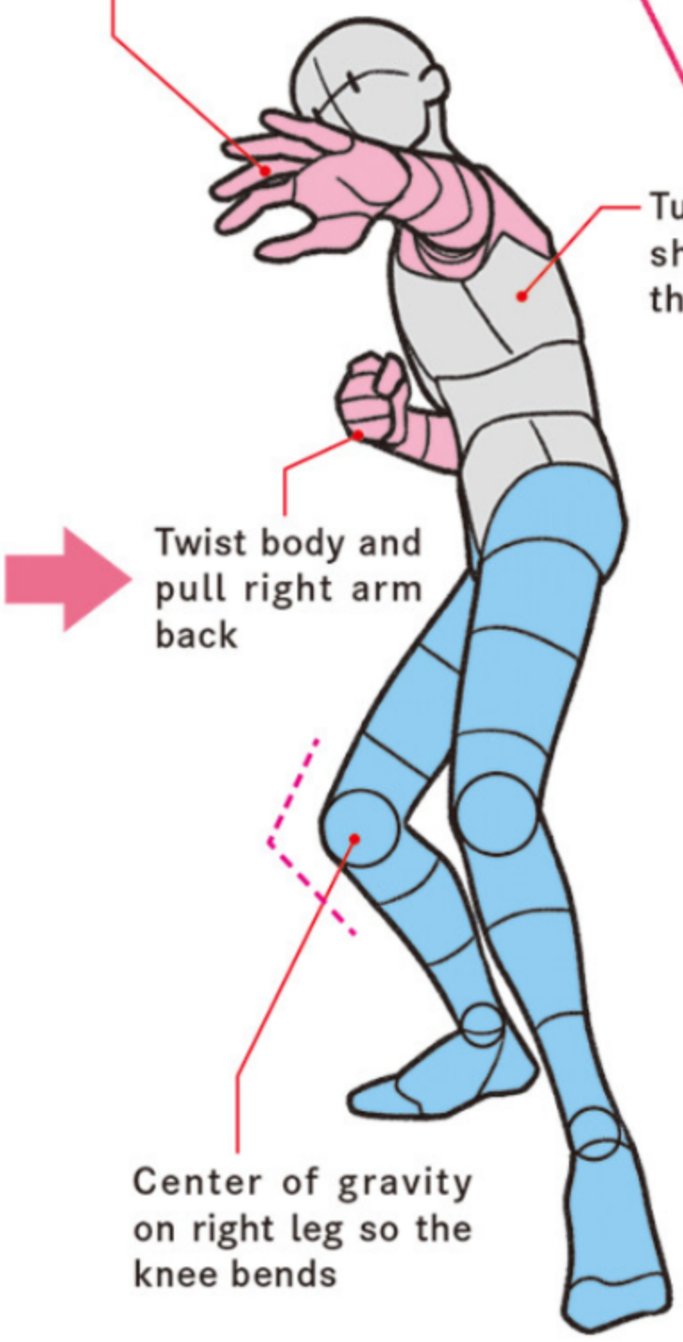
Punch

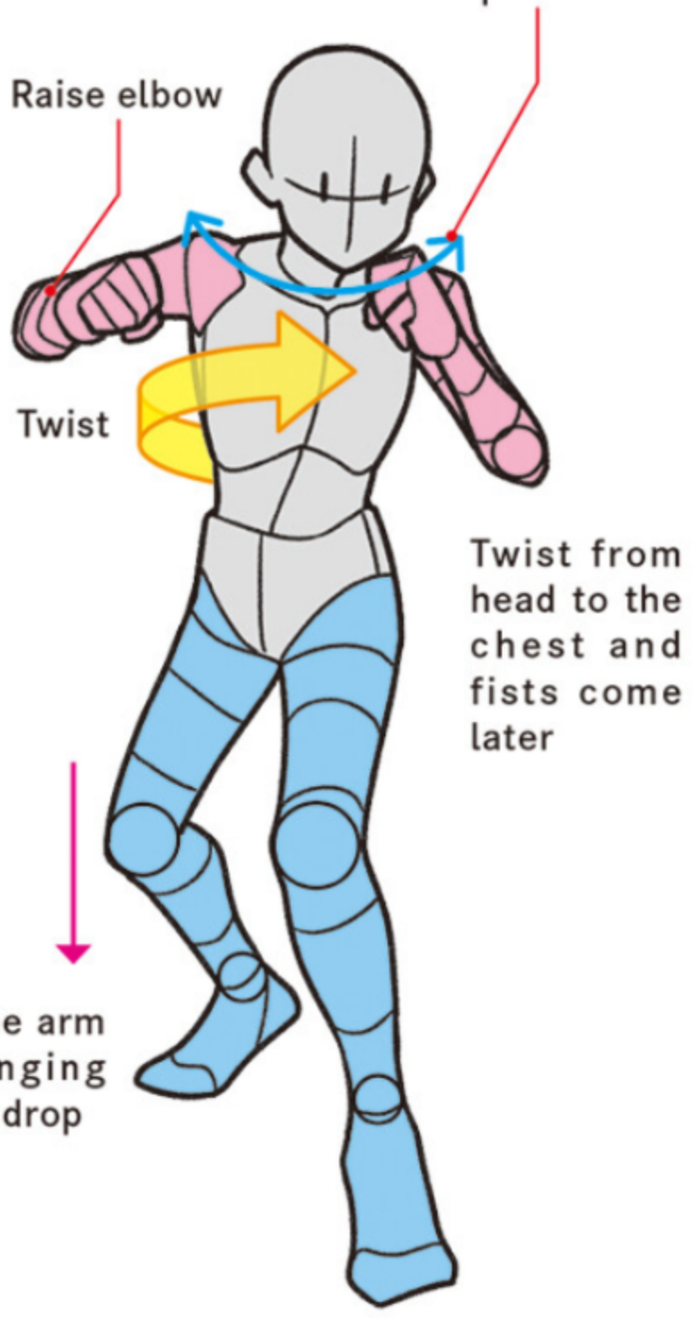
Punches look different depending on the moment that is shown, be it the pre-punch stance, the moment the arm is pulled back, the start of the swing, or the end. The body twists back before a punch and springs back to punch, making the twist an important point to focus on.

The Twist is Key

Fighting styles have a set flow for stances and punches, and understanding these will make your punches look heavier. Learn the basic movements first and then arrange them to fit your character.

Punch Movement





Aim with left hand

Turn body and show a bit of the back

Twist body and pull right arm back

Center of gravity on right leg so the knee bends

Shoulders go back and chest pushes out

Raise elbow

Twist

Twist from head to the chest and fists come later

Power in the arm when swinging so the hips drop

Read about kicks on p.100 to learn more about stances.

Stance

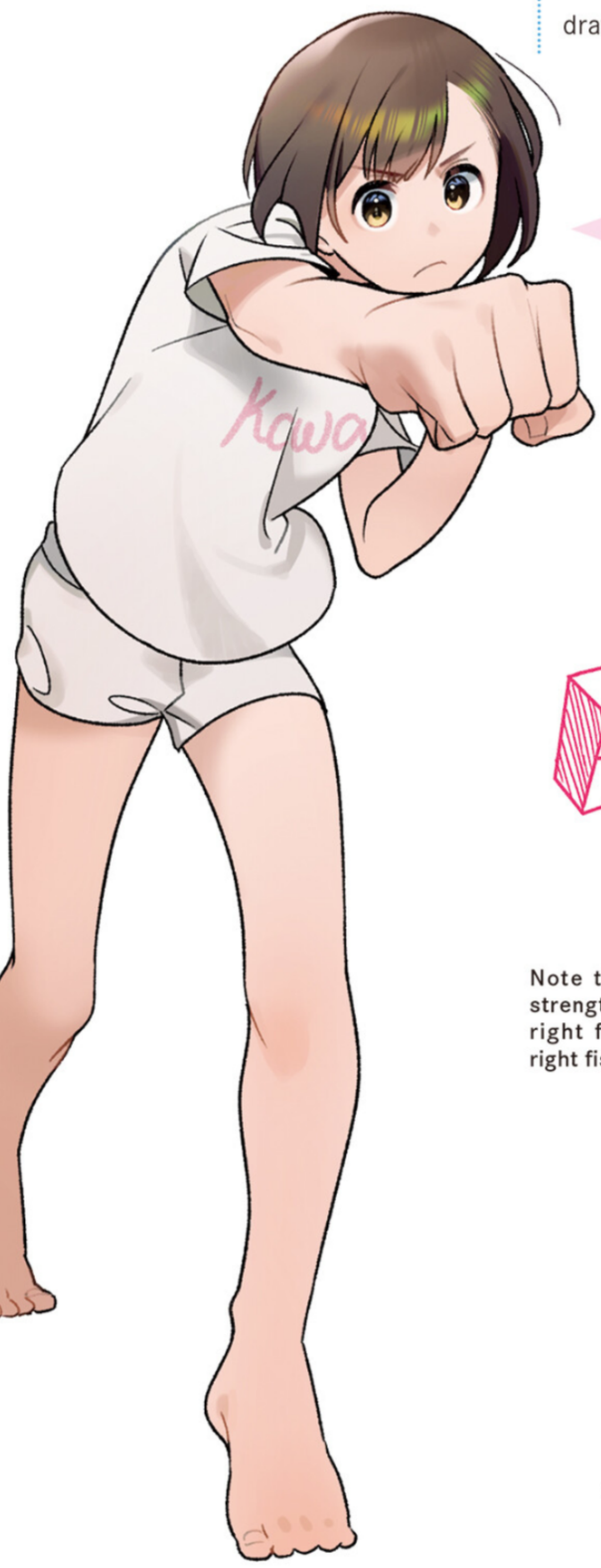
Pull

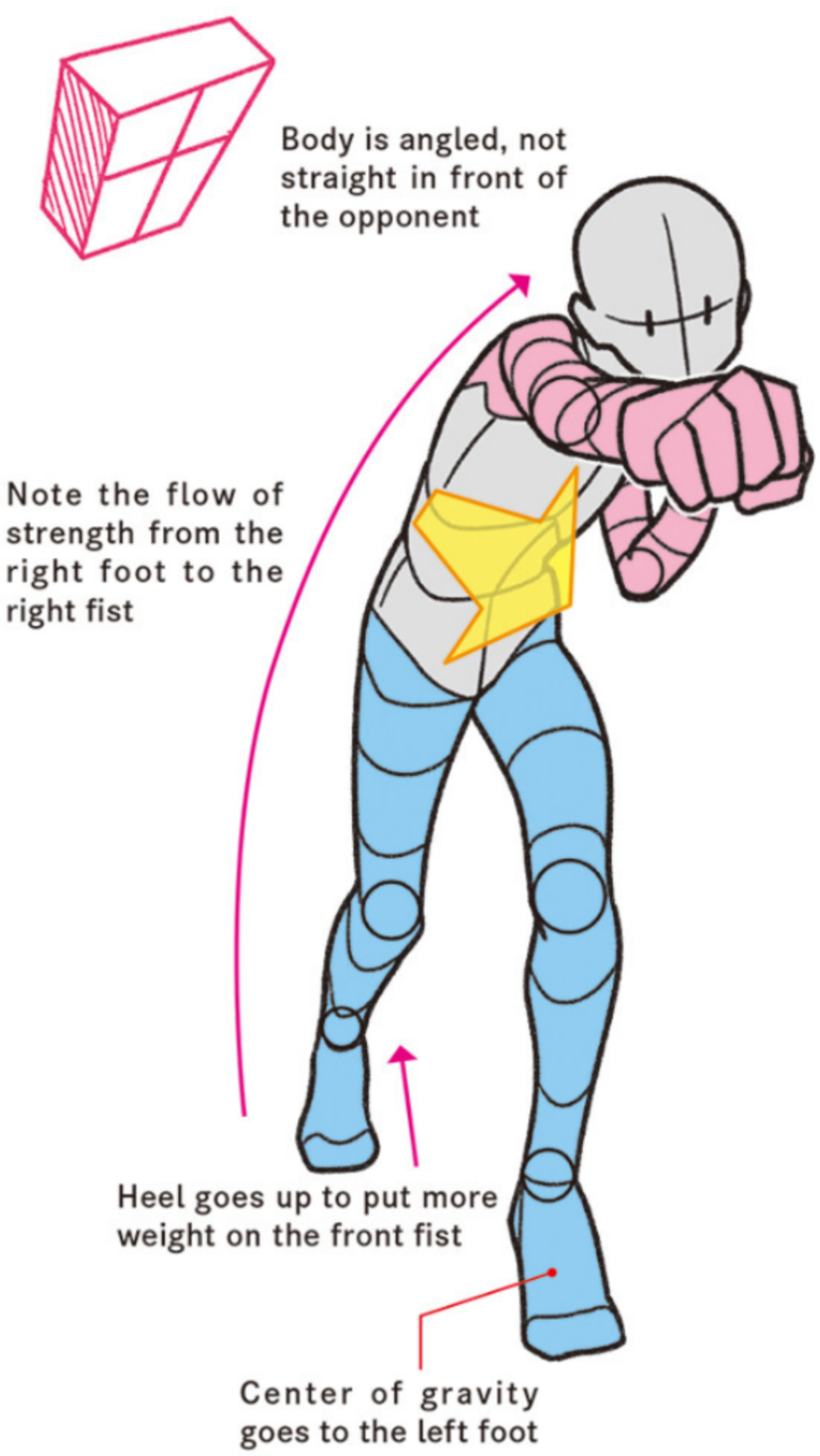
Swing

Pose Focus

How to draw arms

Drawing fists bigger adds momentum! Adding lines to the elbows and shoulders makes the drawing more convincing too.

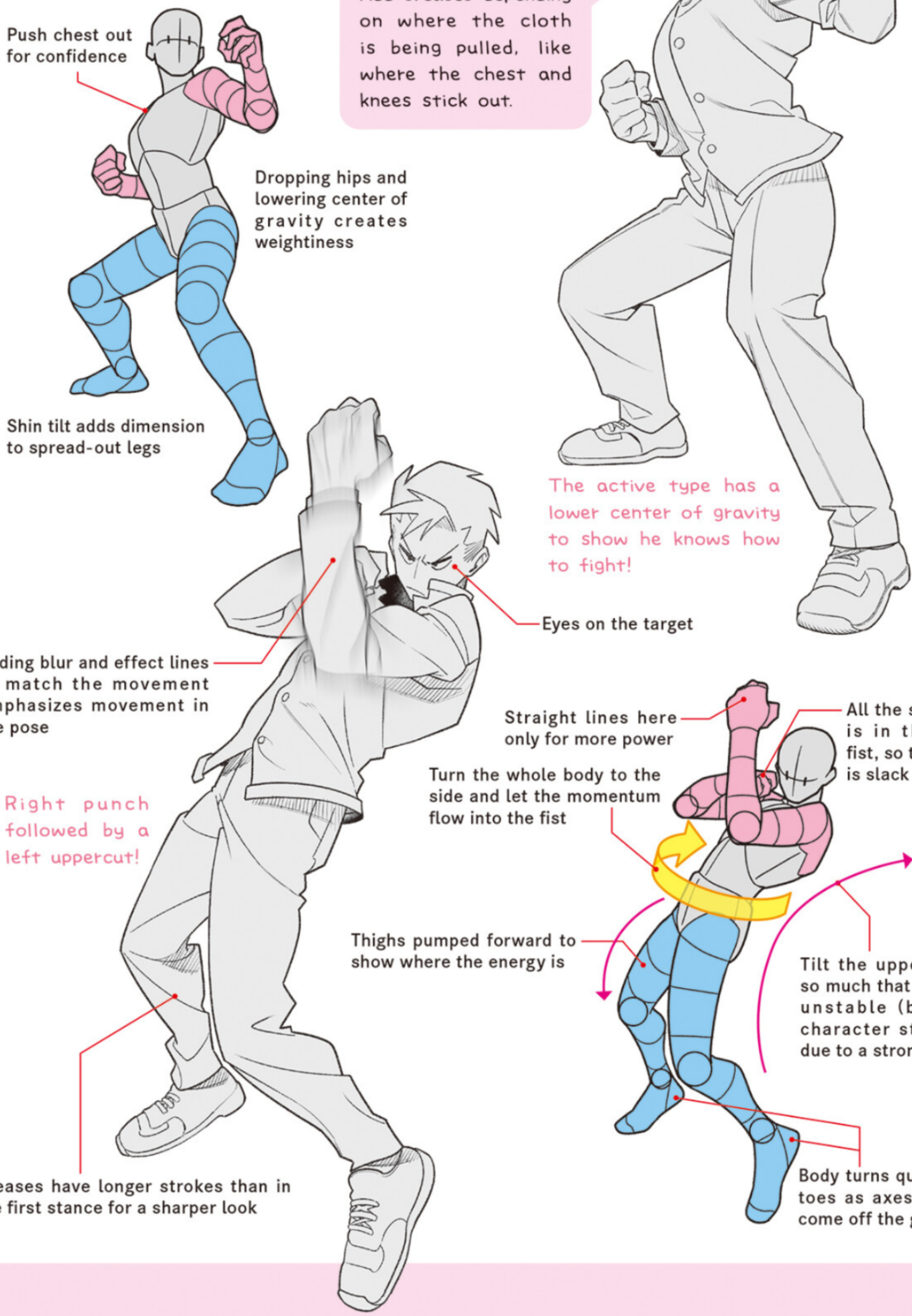




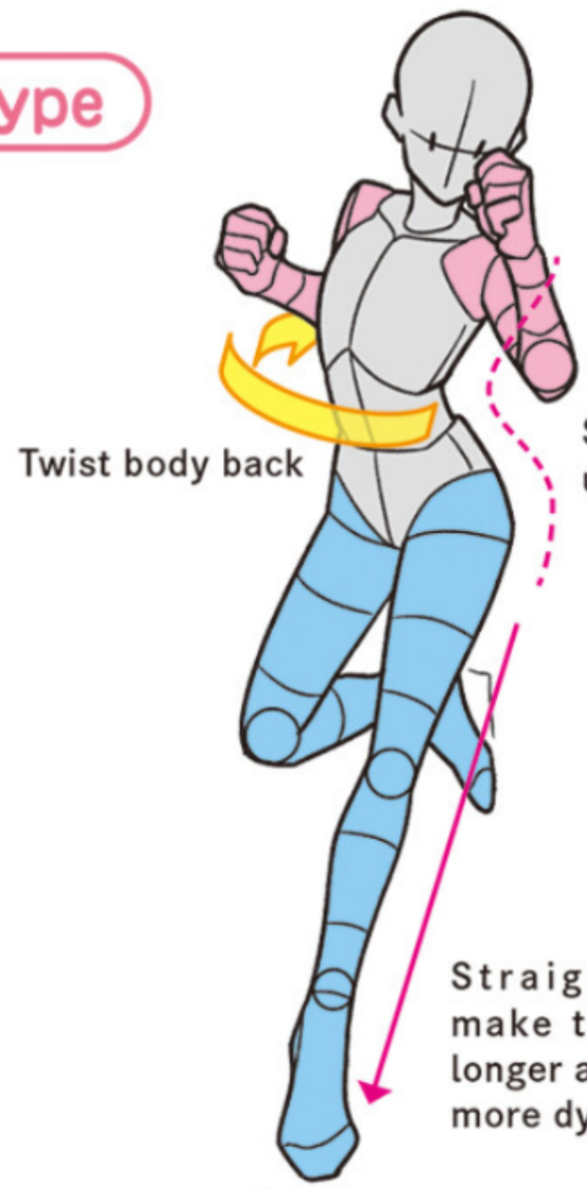
Male and Female Pose Differences

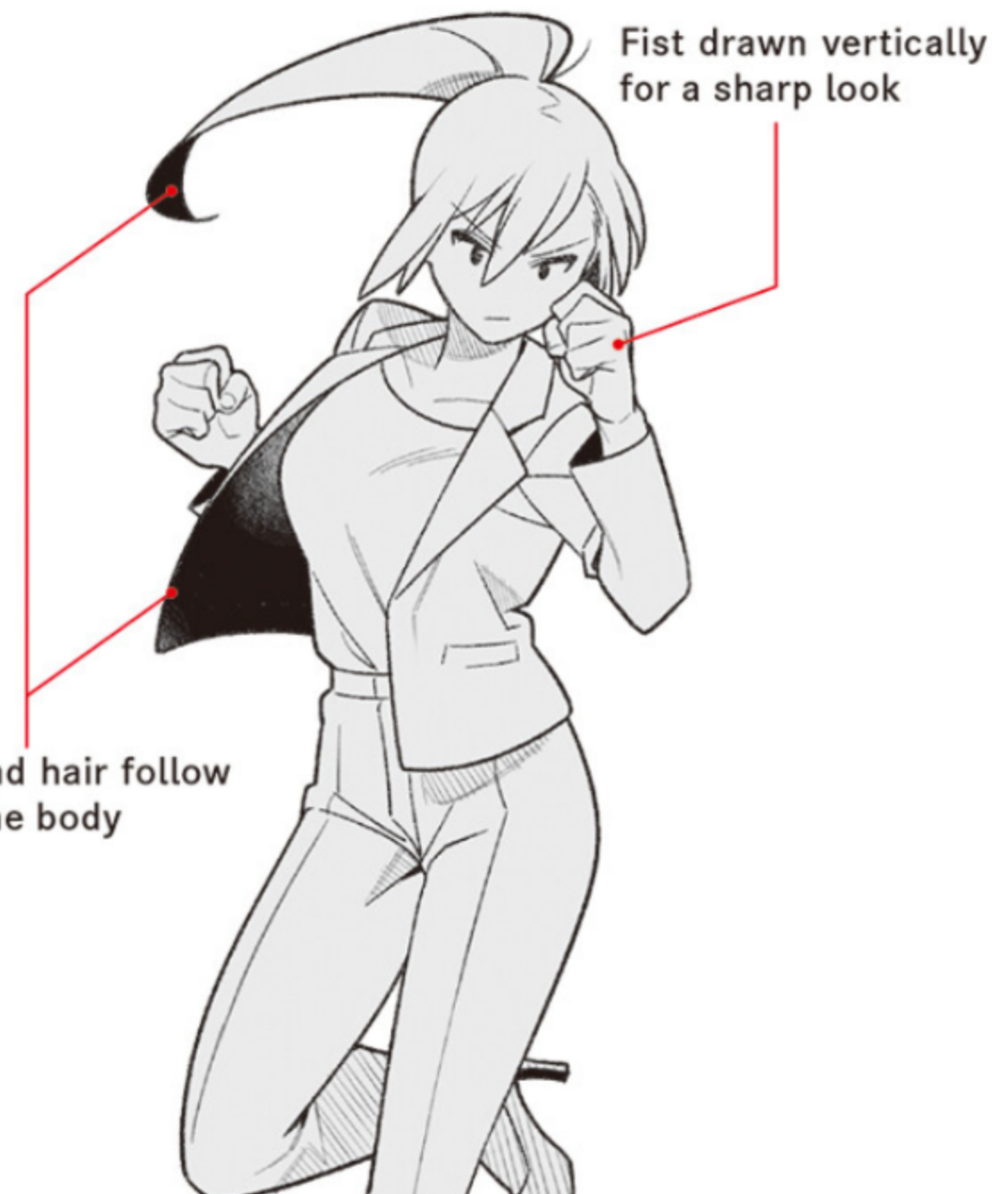
Use the knowledge you've learned so far to follow the basic punching motion and change it by lowering the center of gravity and focusing on straight lines.

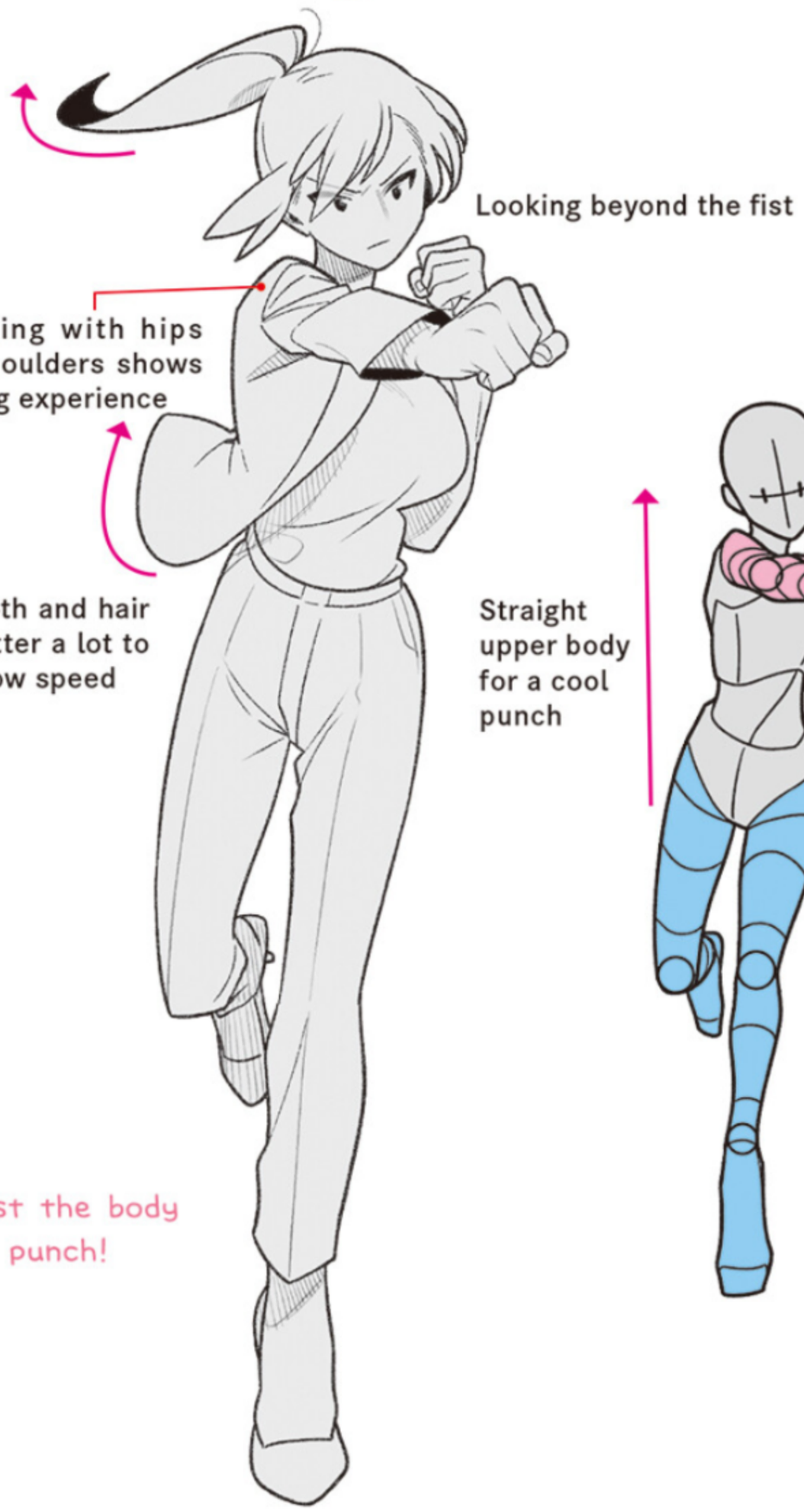
Active Type

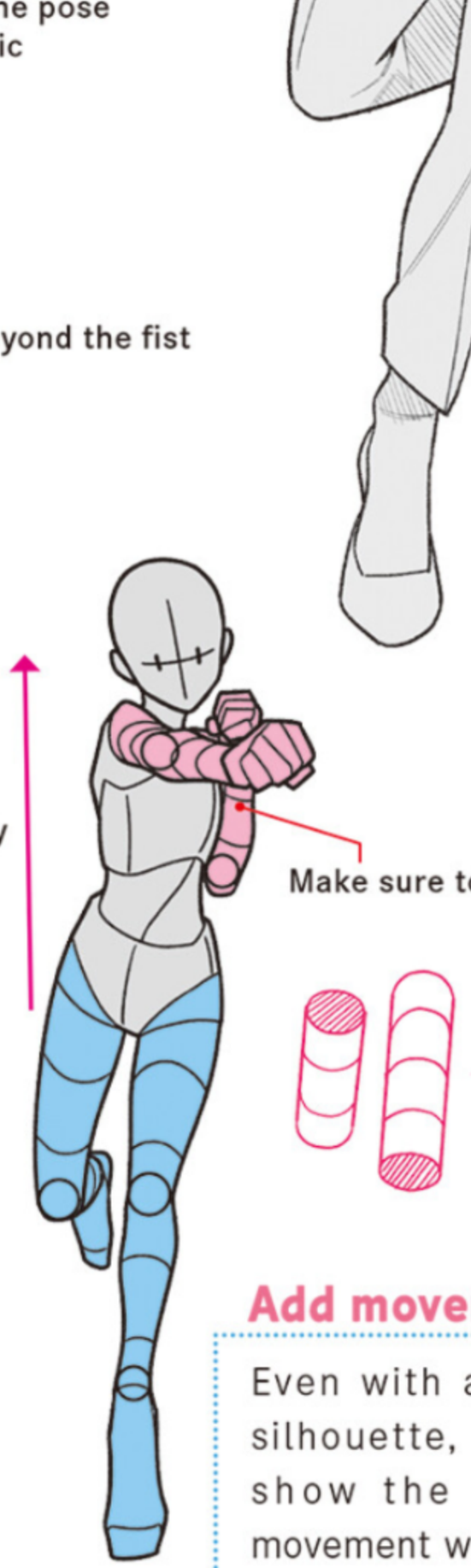


Cool Type





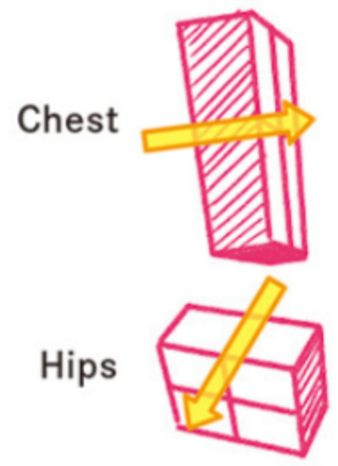




Pay attention to how the legs tilt since the feet go forward and back.

Add movement with tilt

Even with a simple silhouette, you can show the flow of movement with twists and turns in the body.



Chapter 2

09

Action Poses

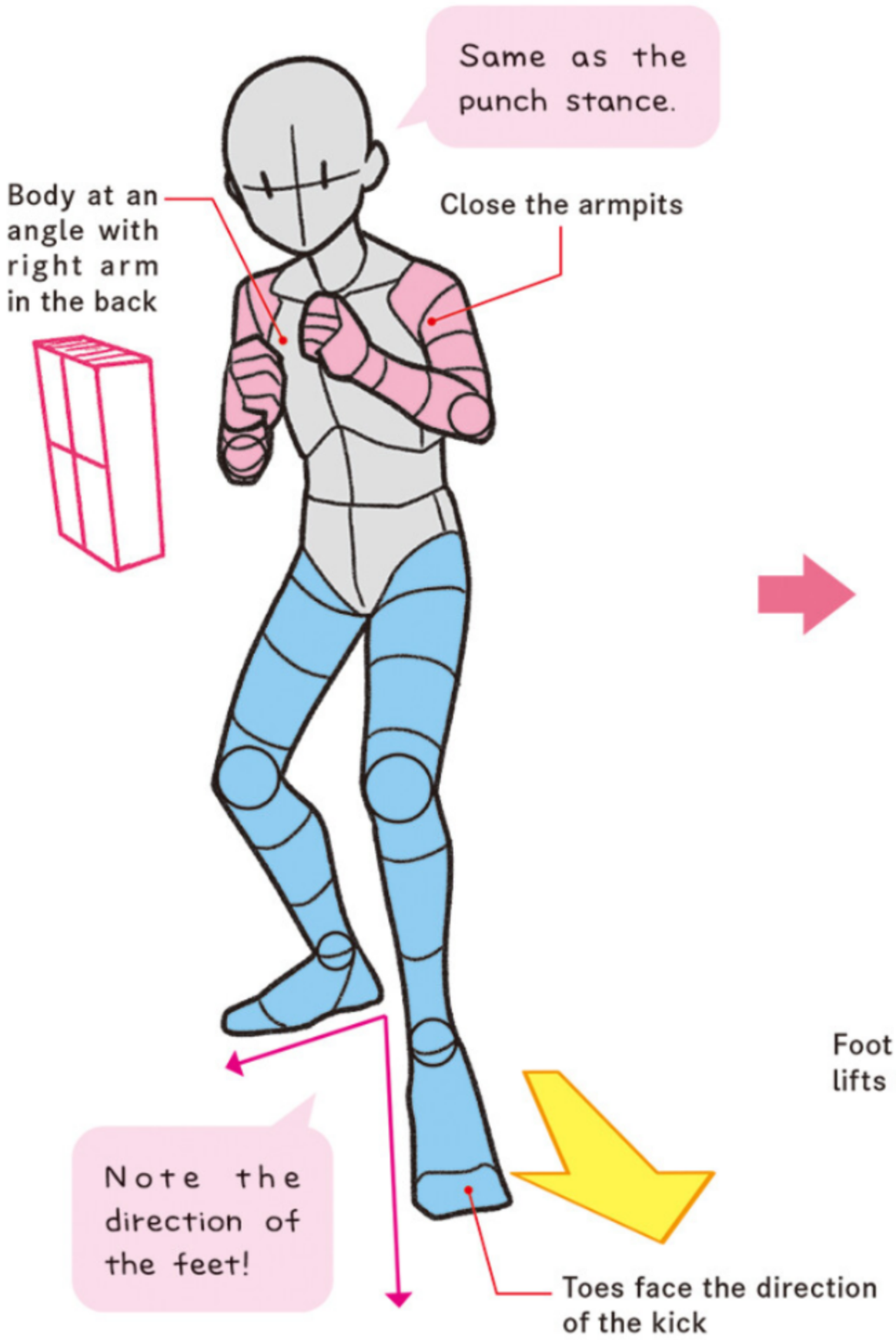
Kick

Kicks, like punches (p.96), start with a ready stance before the main action. The way the body twists is also important in kicking, but rather than twisting the upper and lower body separately, the whole body twists. Note how the body moves differently.

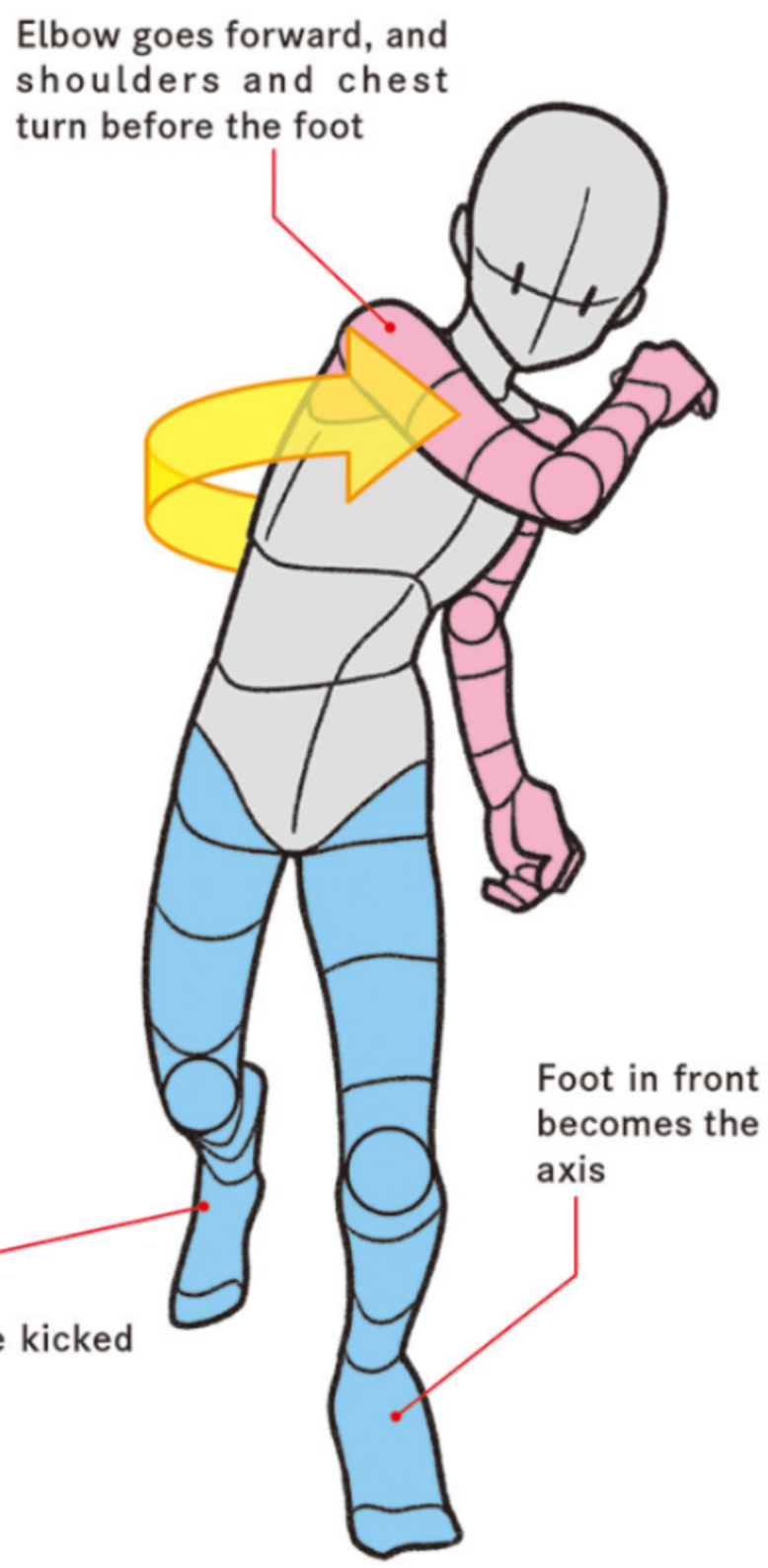
Twist of the Kick

Kicks make the whole body turn, so the movement is simpler than in punches. Drawing the stance and the final kick looks cool, but you should also understand how the kick moves. Focusing on the differences in kicks can make your character's poses look more convincing. Imagine the trajectory of the legs as you draw.

Kick Movement

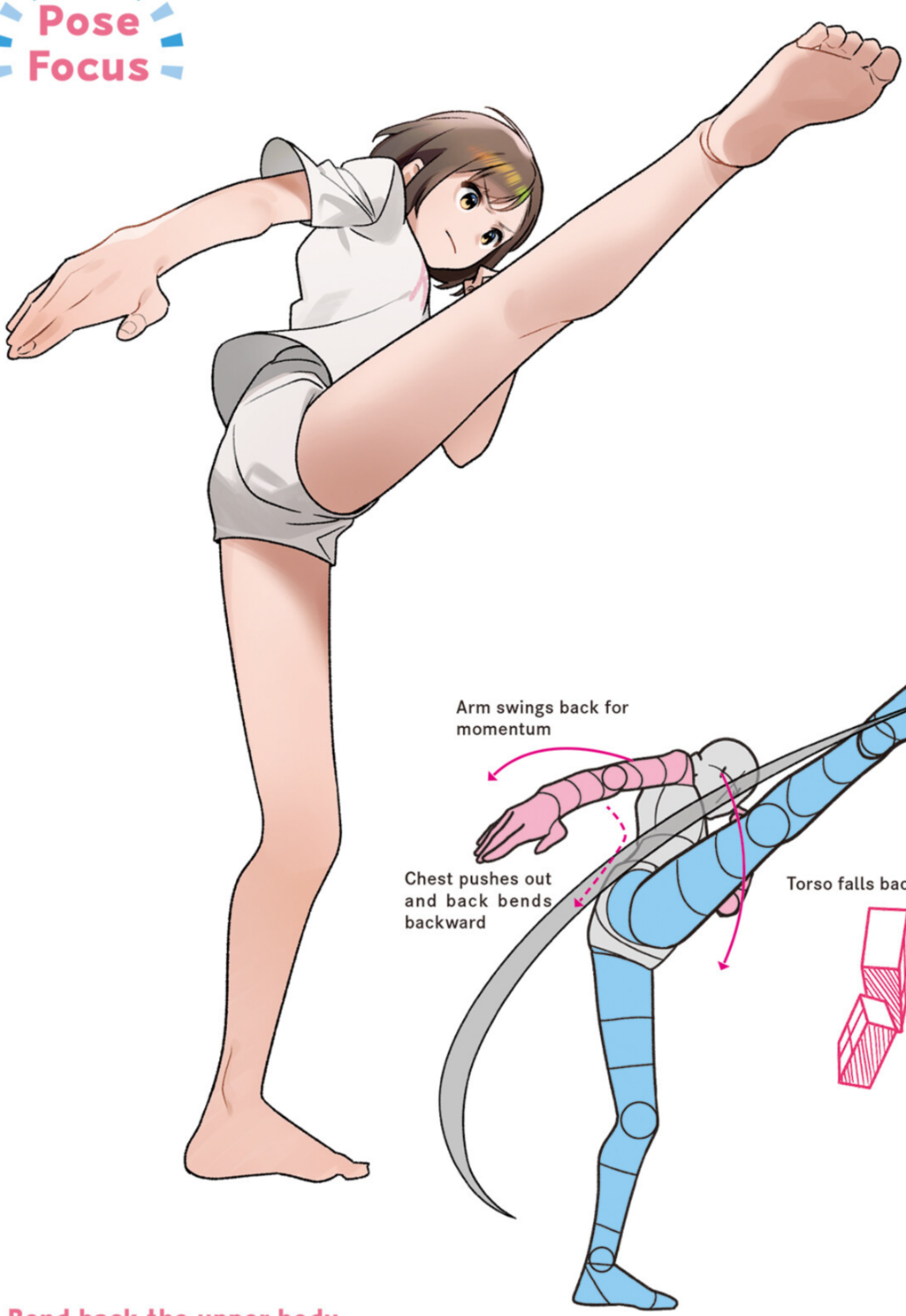


Stance



Start of Kick

Pose Focus



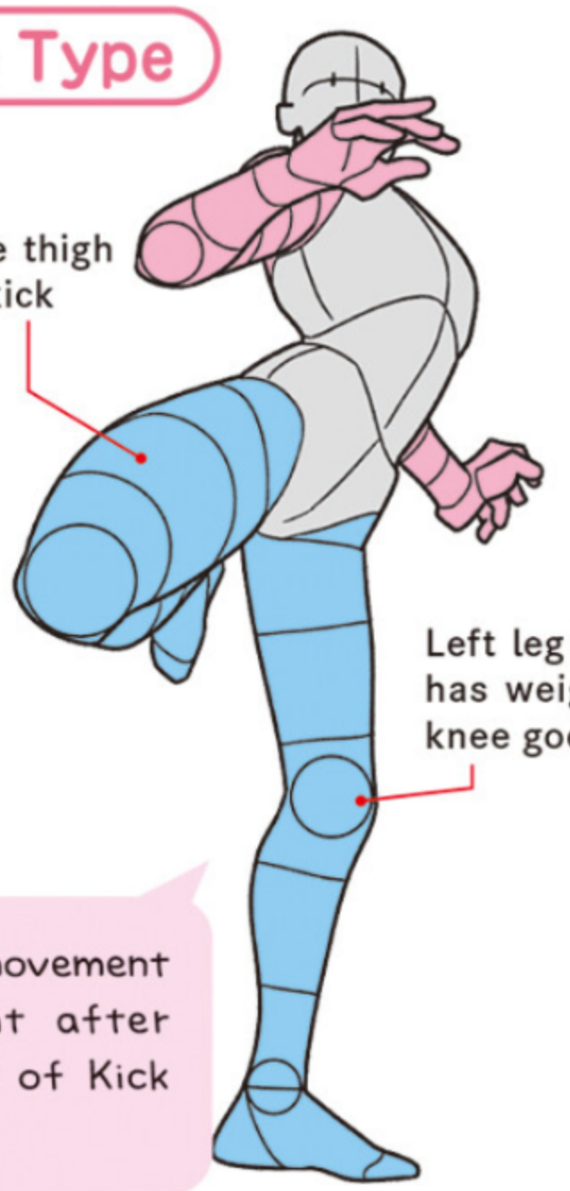
Bend back the upper body

Try drawing the upper body bent far back. This is a bit difficult to draw, but it will make the pose more powerful and convincing.

Male and Female Pose Differences

Adjust the basic kick to match the strength and weight of each character. Think about how a speedy and light kick looks in comparison to a heavy one.

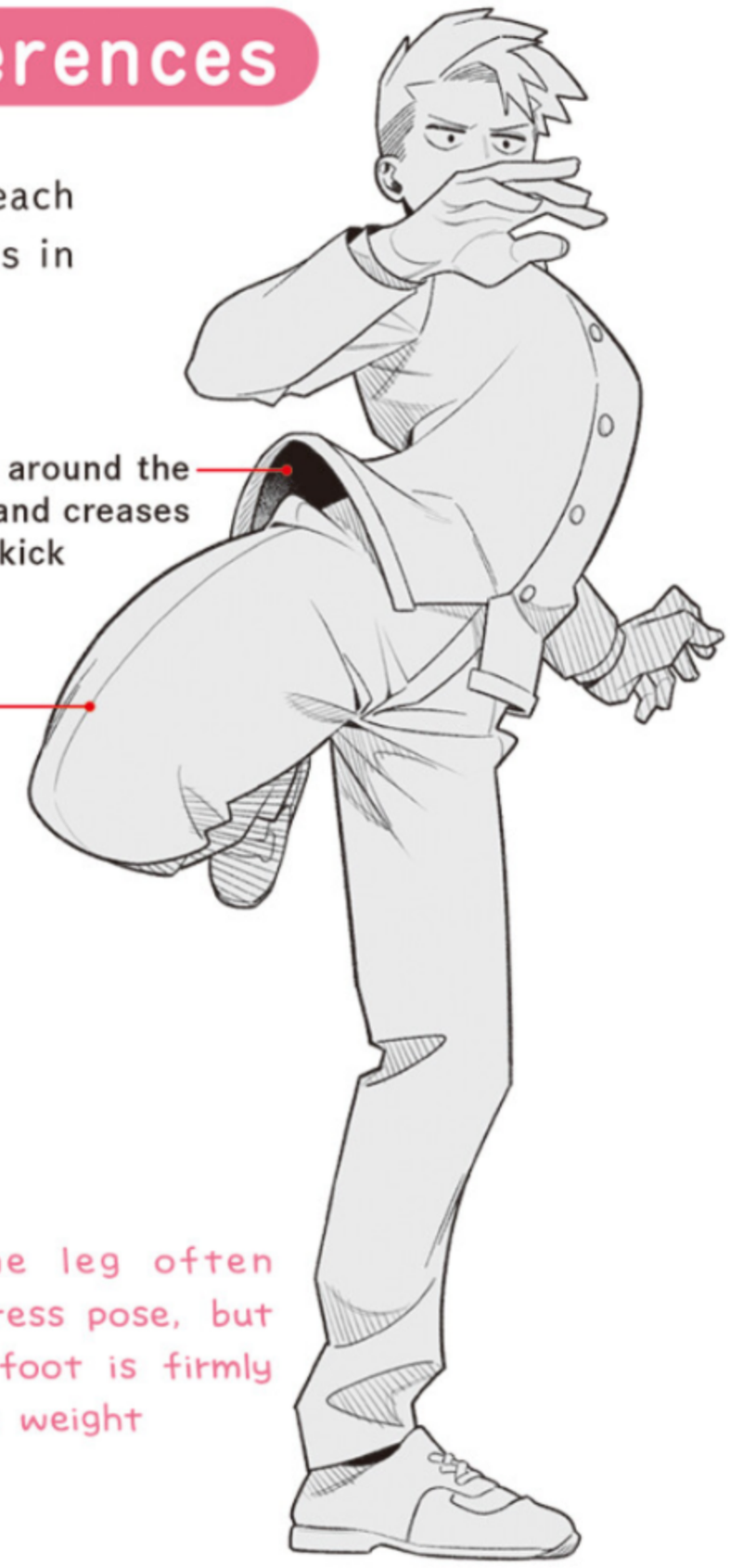
Active Type



Emphasize the thigh for a heavier kick

Left leg is the axis and has weight on it so its knee goes up

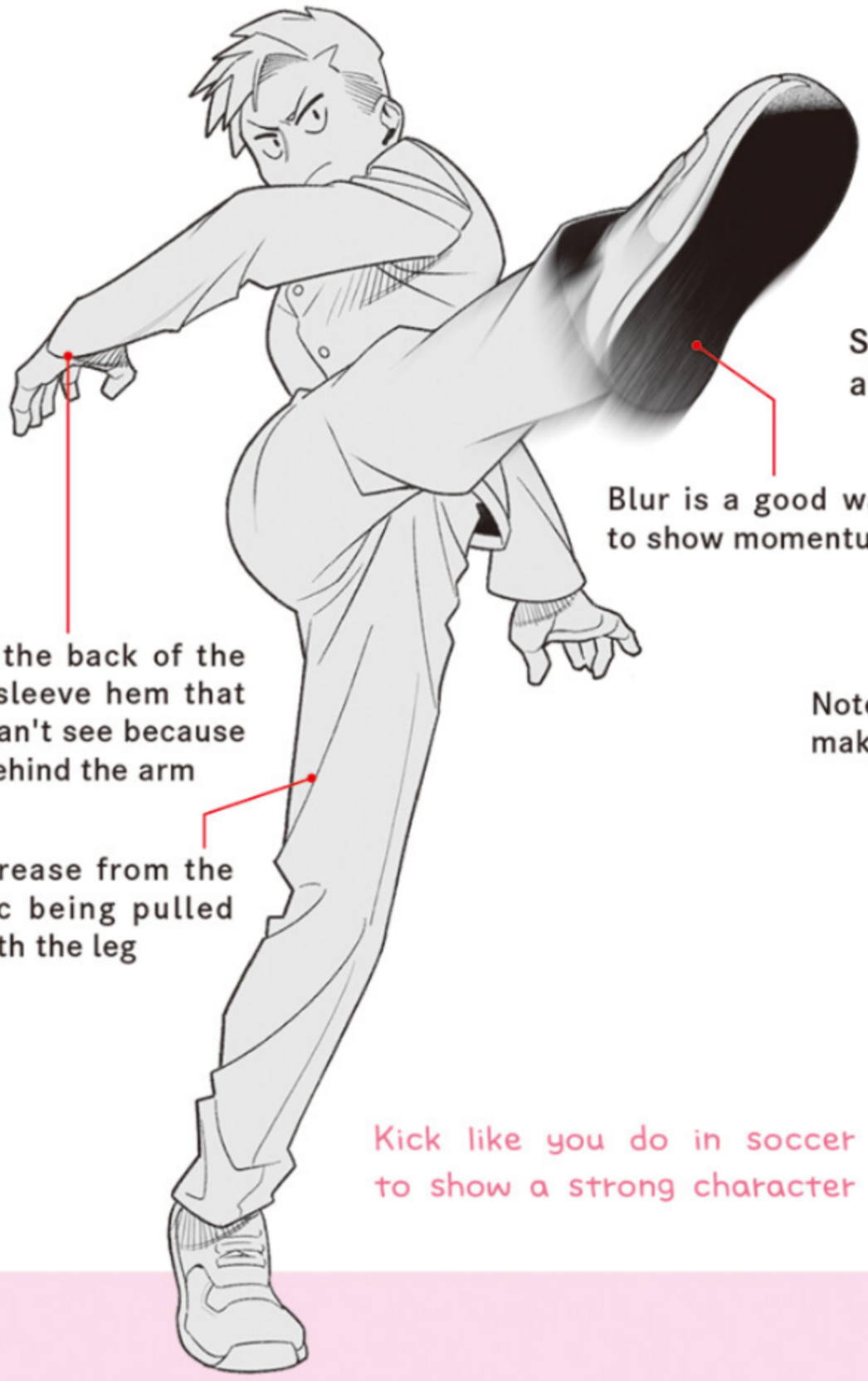
Showing movement from right after the Start of Kick on p. 100.



Add more details around the leg like shadows and creases to emphasize the kick

Vertical lines on pants to emphasize the large legs

Standing on one leg often shows an in-progress pose, but the sole of the foot is firmly grounded to show weight

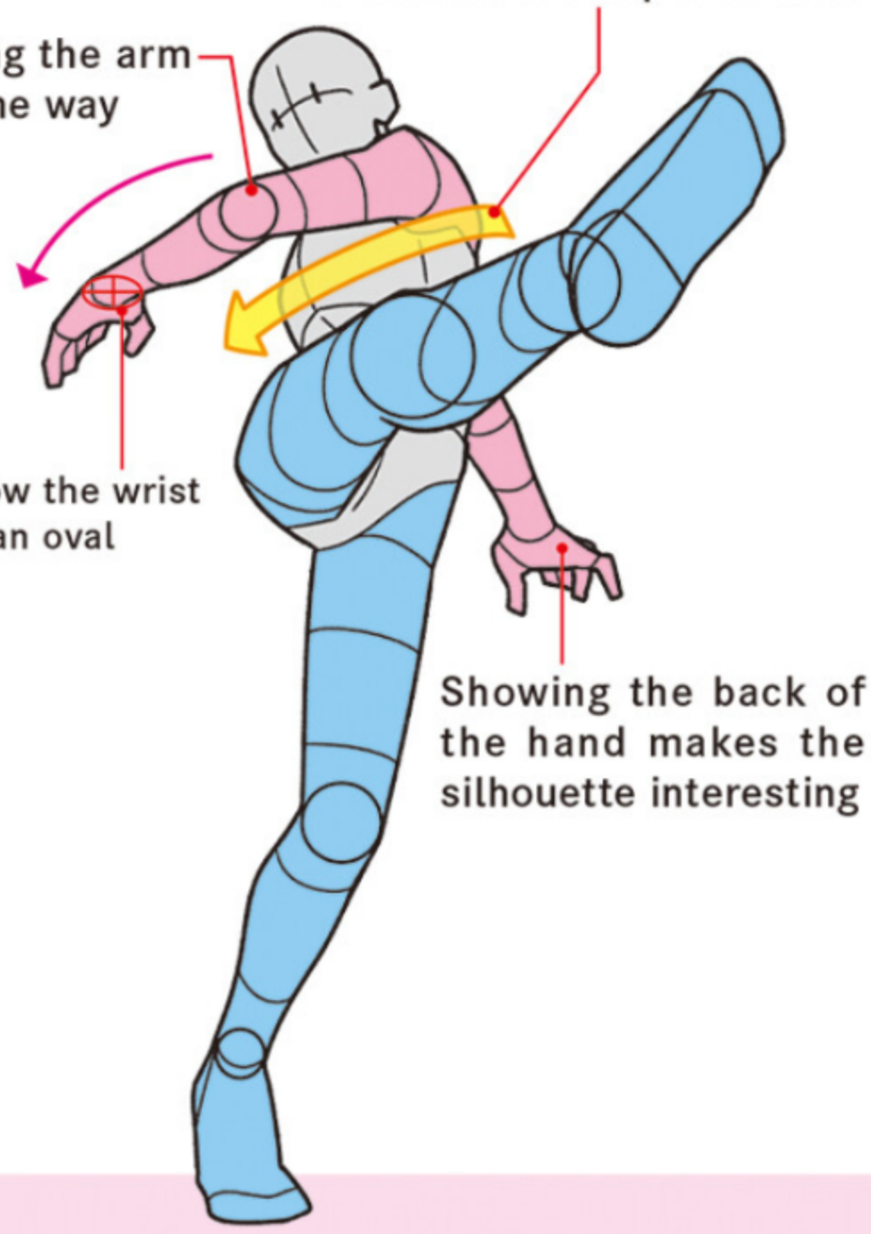


Note the back of the oval sleeve hem that you can't see because it's behind the arm

Big crease from the fabric being pulled up with the leg

Blur is a good way to show momentum

Kick like you do in soccer to show a strong character



Twist the upper body like in soccer for a composed look

Swing the arm all the way

Note how the wrist makes an oval

Showing the back of the hand makes the silhouette interesting

Cool Type

Showing a bit of the back of the arm makes the body tilt easier to understand

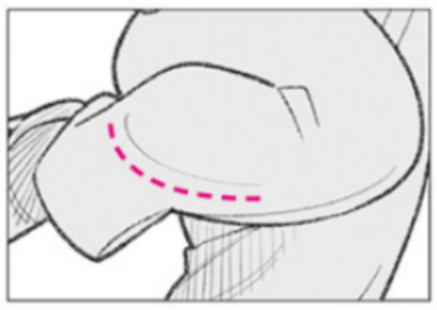
Twist the upper body a lot

Kick goes sideways so the shin also falls sideways

Stand on the toes to make the leg look longer and cooler

Creases at the calves

When the knee is bent tightly, the thigh and calf press together and creates a round line. You can see this crease often with slacks.



Bigger stance means more flutter in hair and clothing

Twisting the entire body looks more graceful

Moving the hair with the kick looks good

Drawing in the trouser seam shows the angle of the hips

Straight lines in the arms and legs show speed

Adding more straight lines show off speed.

Emphasize straight lines to look cool

Action Poses

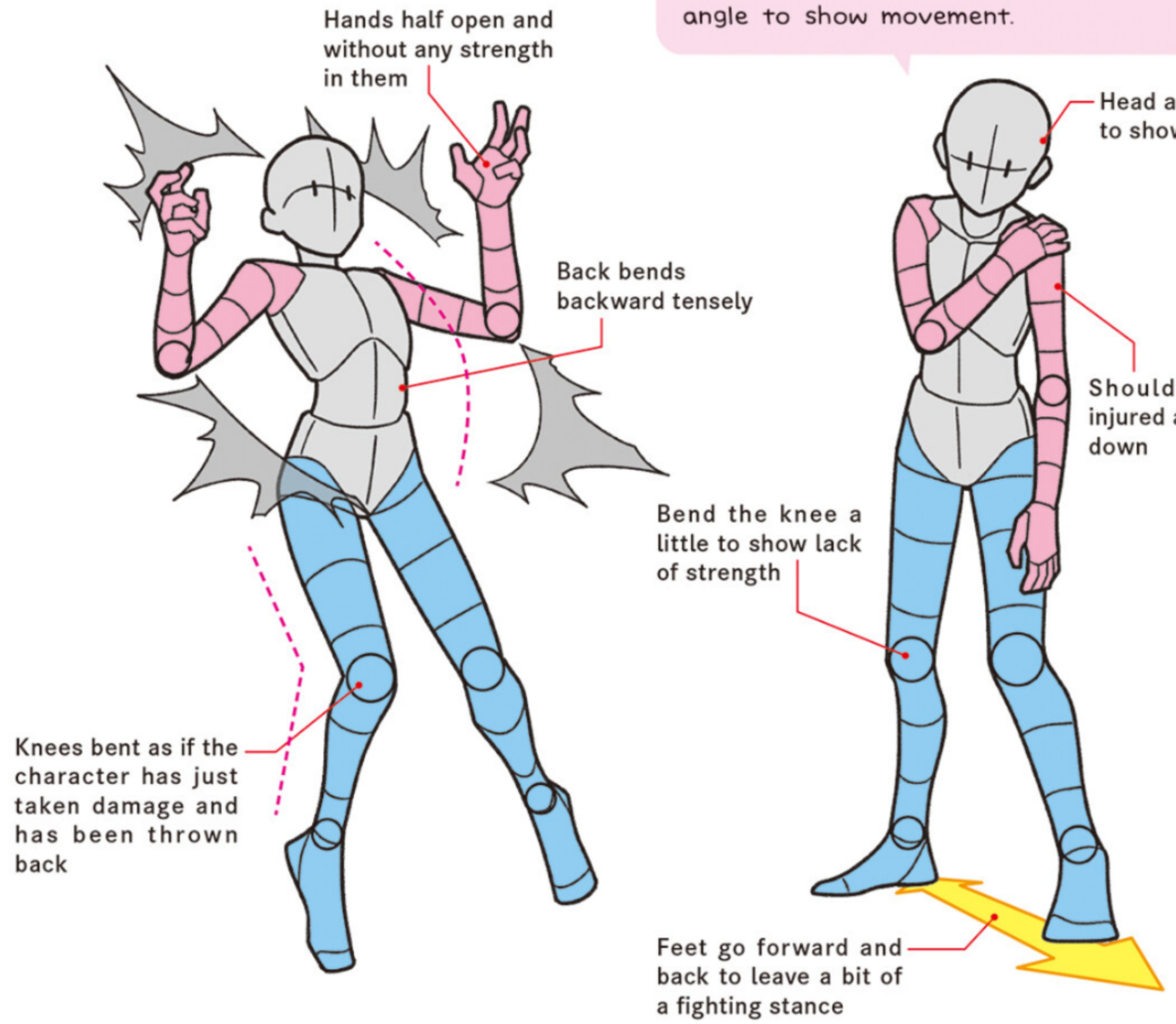
Hurt

This pose shows characters taking damage like they would in battle scenes. The pose changes depending on the level of damage. Make the character's gaze match the situation. For example, making eye contact with the viewer makes it look like the character is not averting their gaze from their opponent even when hurt.

Center of Gravity on the Ground

To make it seem like the character could fall at any moment, the hurt pose has the body close to the ground. Pay attention to the center of gravity and make it look like the character is stepping on the ground. This is a pose after receiving damage and a pose at the moment of damage.

Damage Level



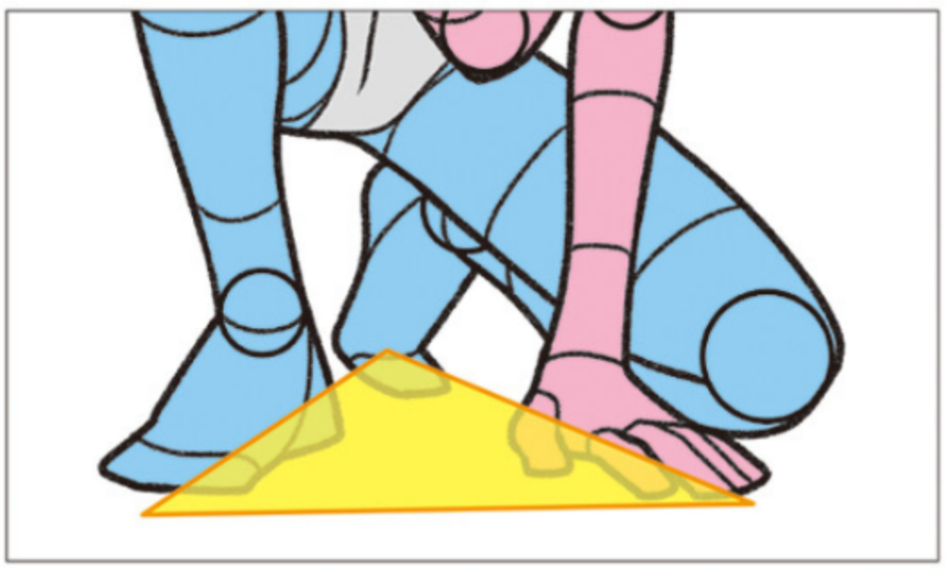
Moment of Damage

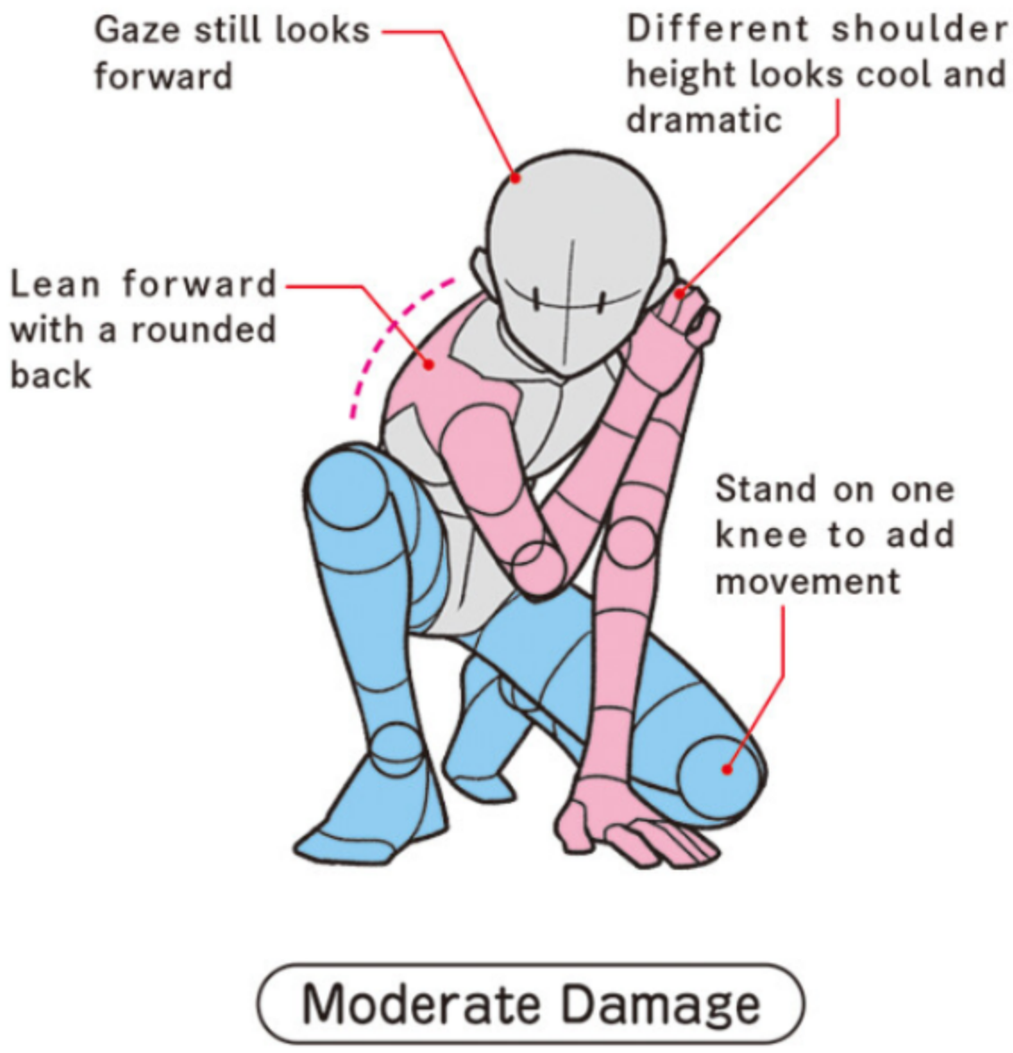
Light Damage

Pose Focus

Complex center of gravity

For this pose, one hand is on the ground along with the feet. To create stability where they touch the ground, create a triangle shape with the hand and feet.





Moderate Damage

Drawing Different Damage Levels

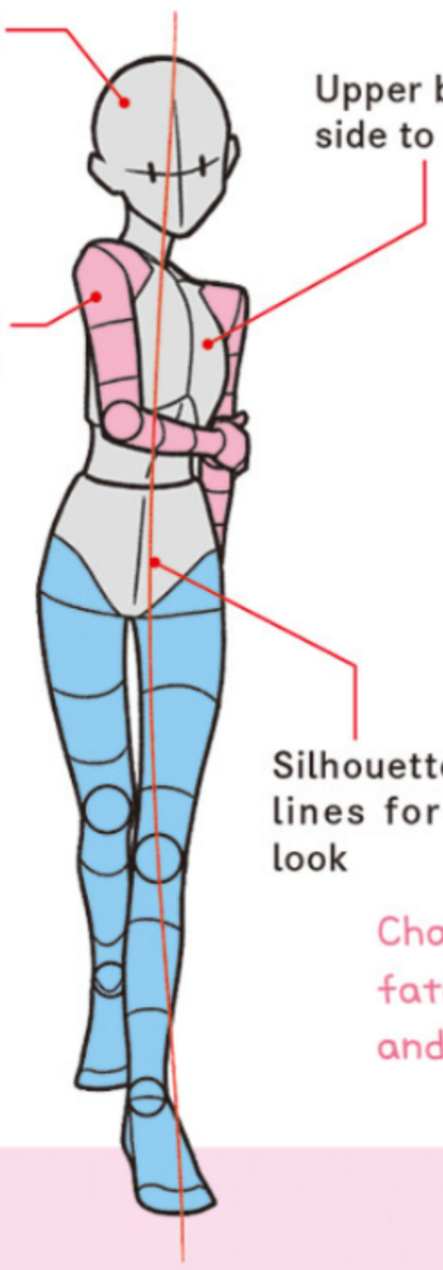
Next, we will compare active and cool types in poses with different damage levels.

Light Damage

Active Type

Glares back at opponent even when hurt

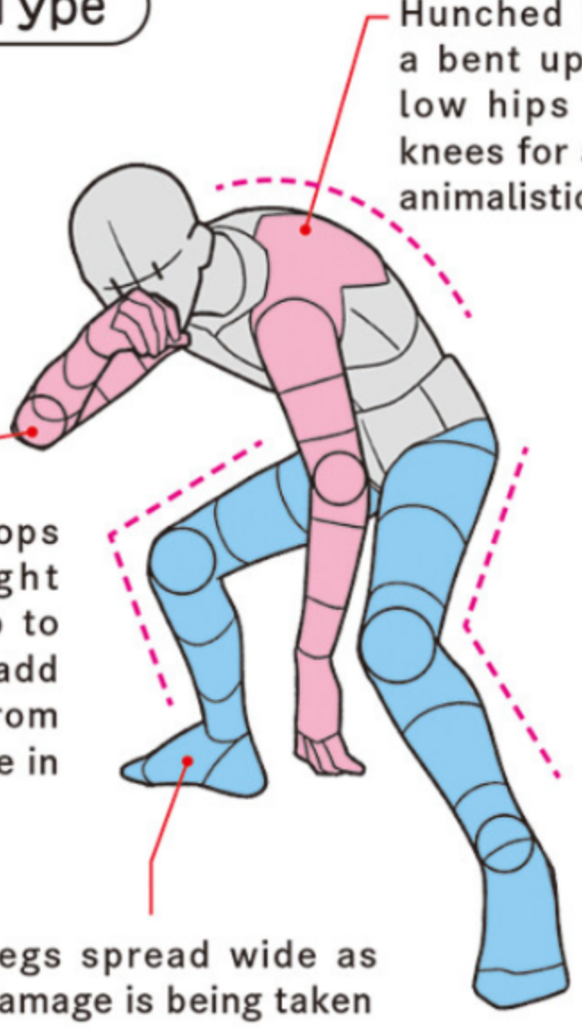
Cool Type



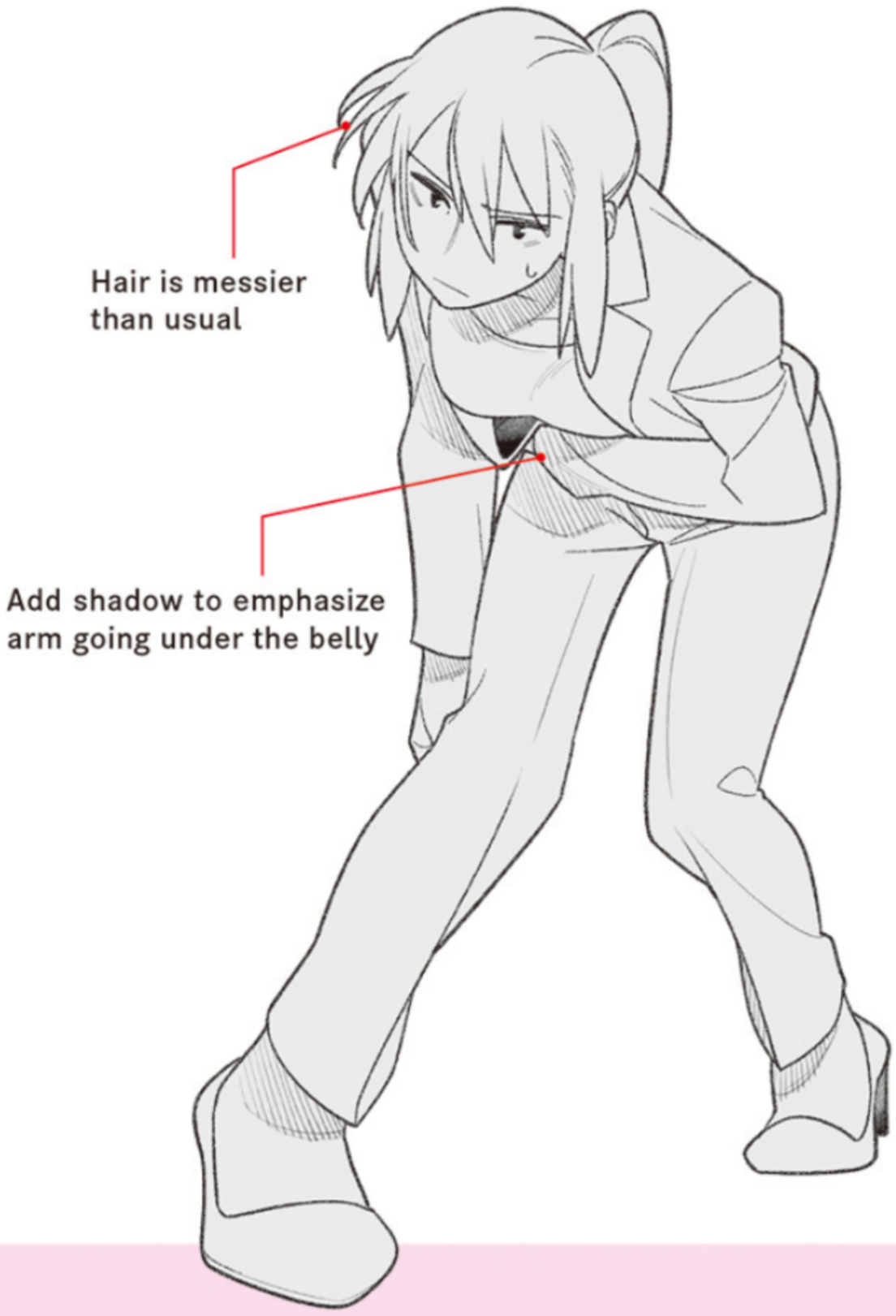
Character is not injured fatally but on the defensive and wary of the opponent

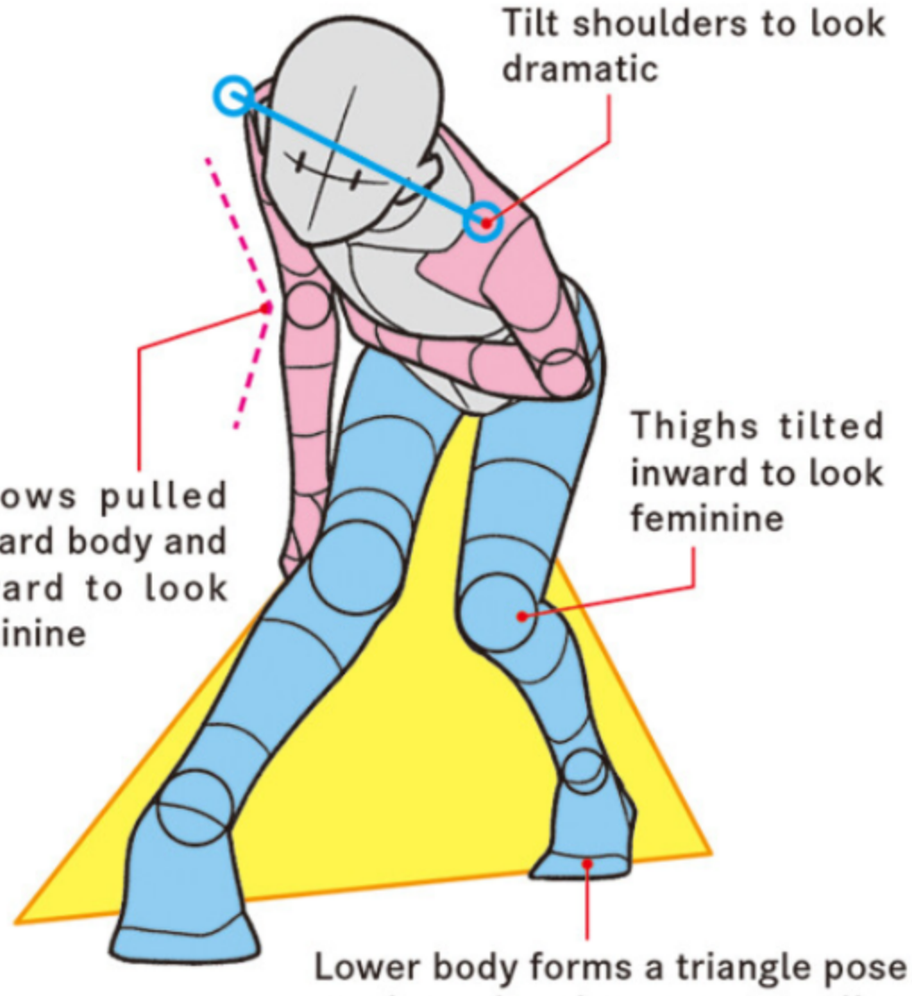
Moderate Damage

Active Type



Cool Type

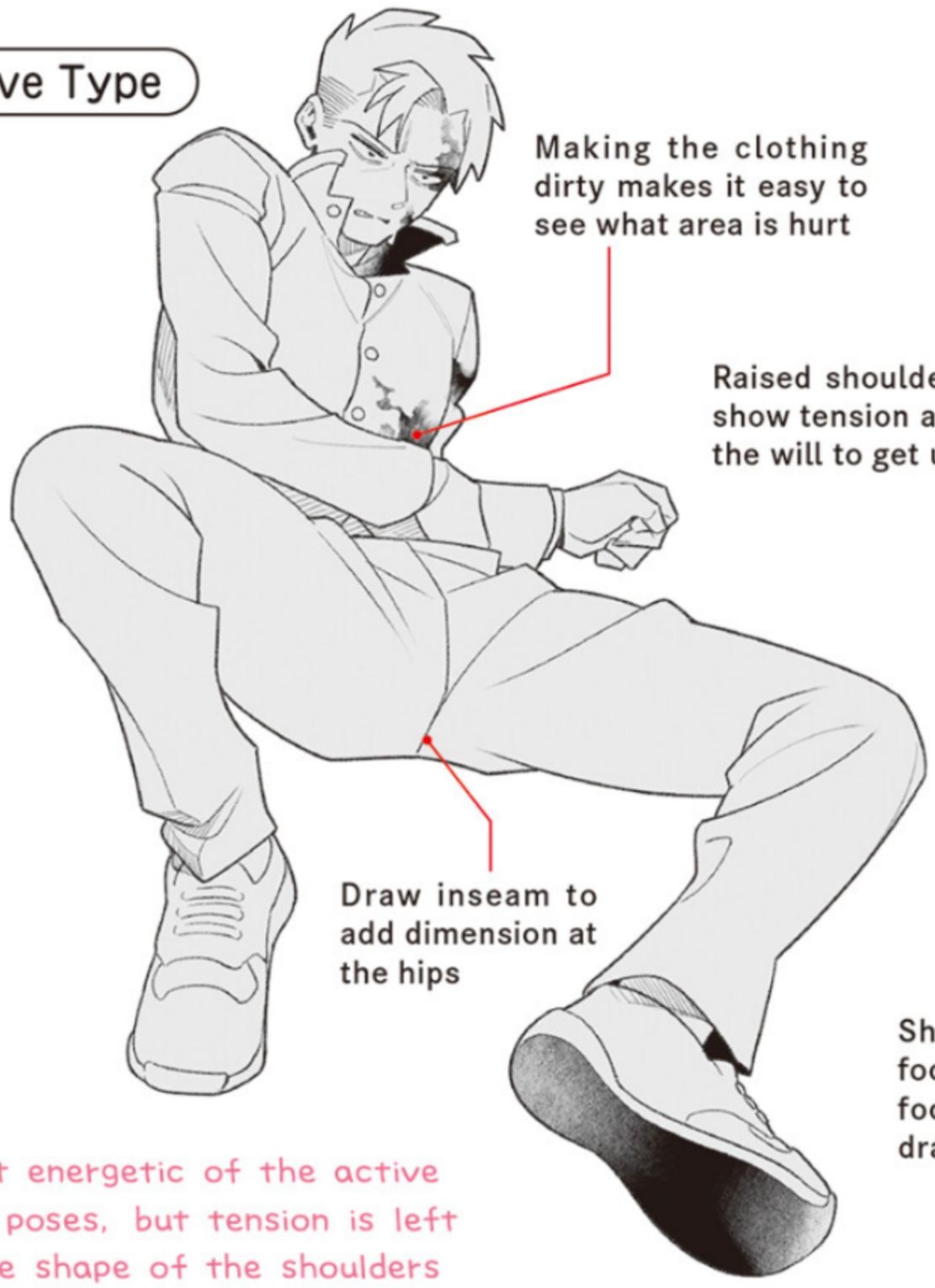




Body moves closer to the ground with more damage taken

Heavy Damage

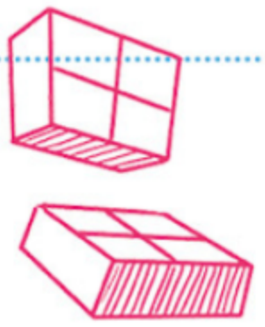
Active Type

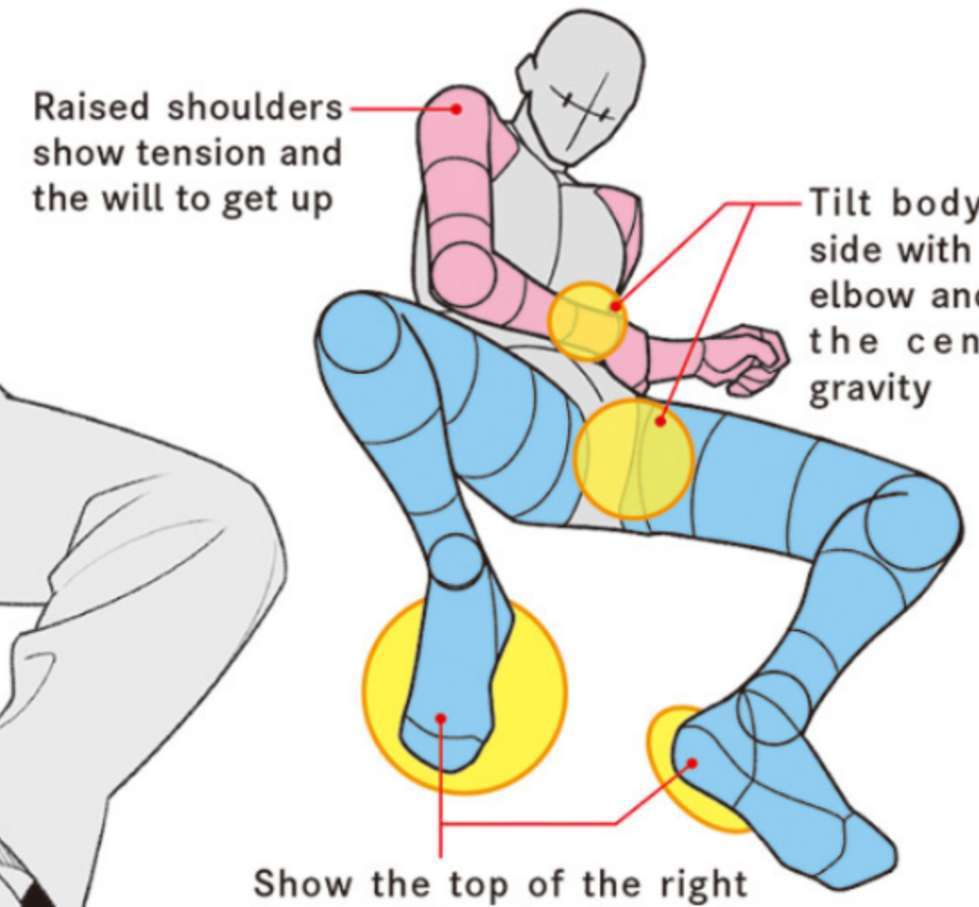


Least energetic of the active type poses, but tension is left in the shape of the shoulders

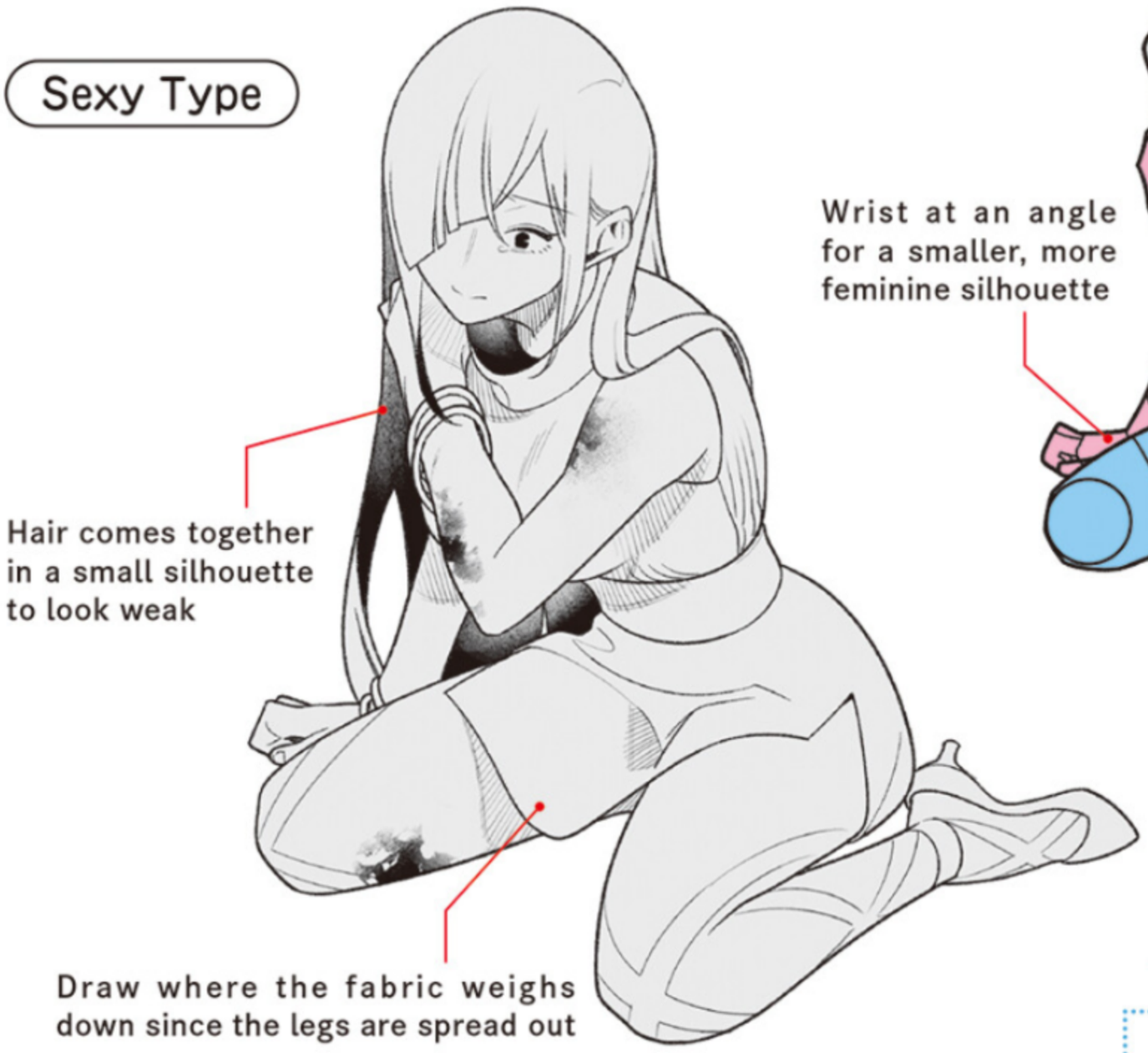
Upper body angle when getting up

When only raising the upper body, pay special attention to the angle of the hips.

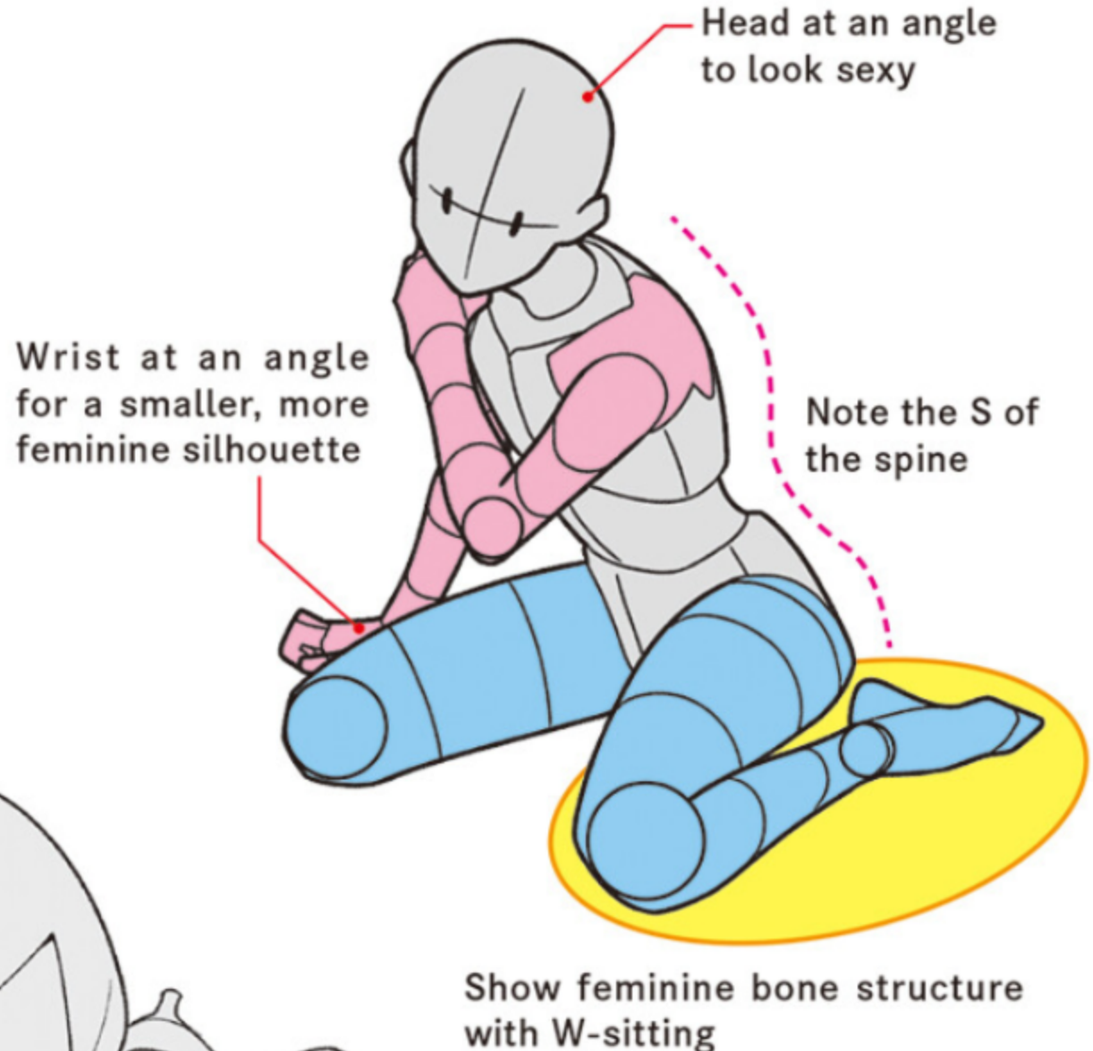




Sexy Type



Hips and legs are completely on the ground, showing a lack of desire to fight



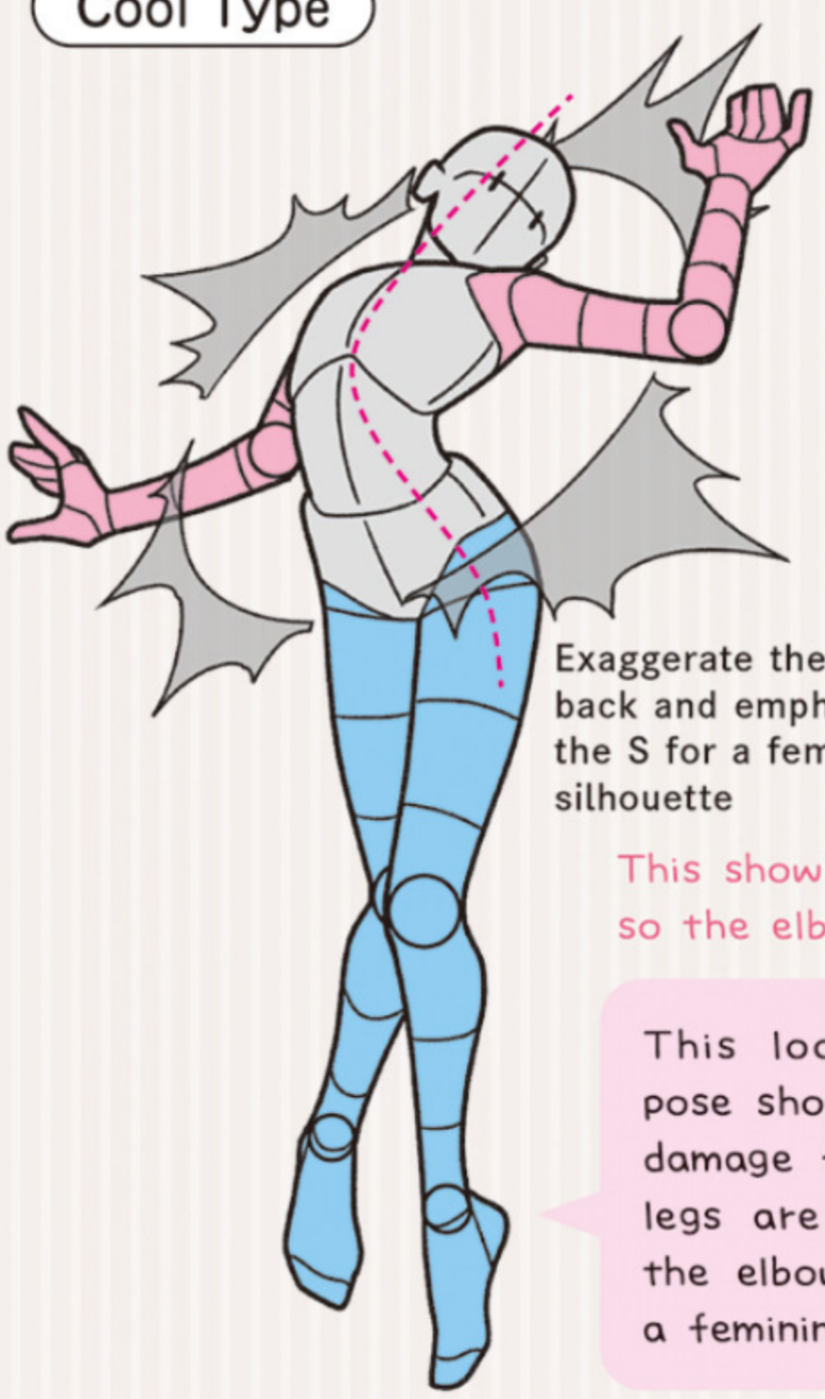
Women and W-sitting

It's hard for men to do this pose because of their bone structure.

Column Moment of Damage

This pose shows the moment that the character is hurt. The body is tense and the back bends backward. The tension forces the knees and elbows to bend too. You can also put the arms out in front to try to protect the body from the impact.

Cool Type



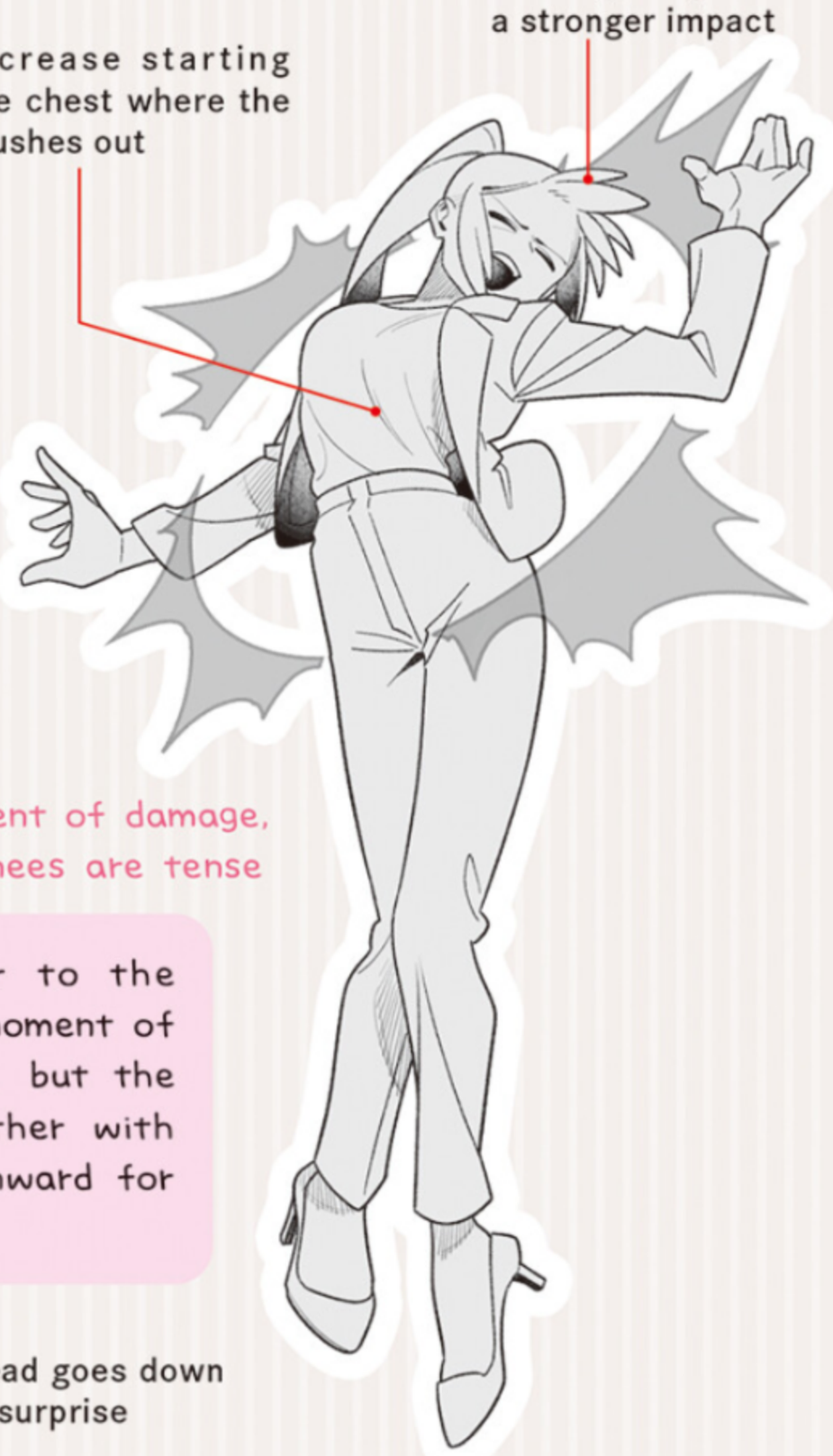
Add a crease starting from the chest where the chest pushes out

Exaggerate the bent back and emphasize the S for a feminine silhouette

This shows the moment of damage, so the elbows and knees are tense

This looks similar to the pose showing the moment of damage from p.104, but the legs are put together with the elbows going inward for a feminine touch.

Floating bangs show a stronger impact



Cute Type

Head goes down in surprise

Shift knees to keep them asymmetrical

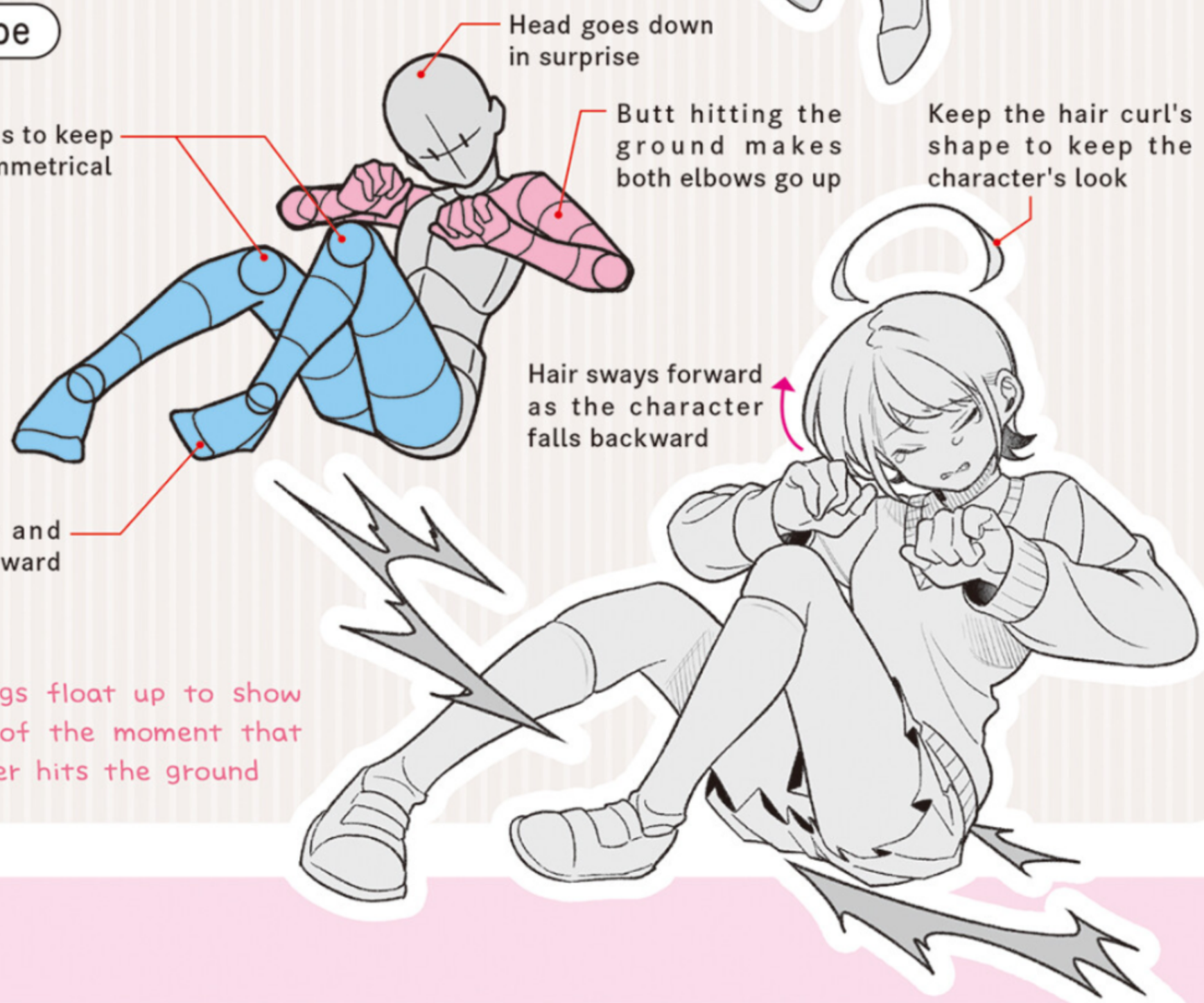
Butt hitting the ground makes both elbows go up

Keep the hair curl's shape to keep the character's look

Hair sways forward as the character falls backward

Close knees and turn ankles inward to look cute

Arms and legs float up to show the impact of the moment that the character hits the ground



Chapter 2

11

Action Poses

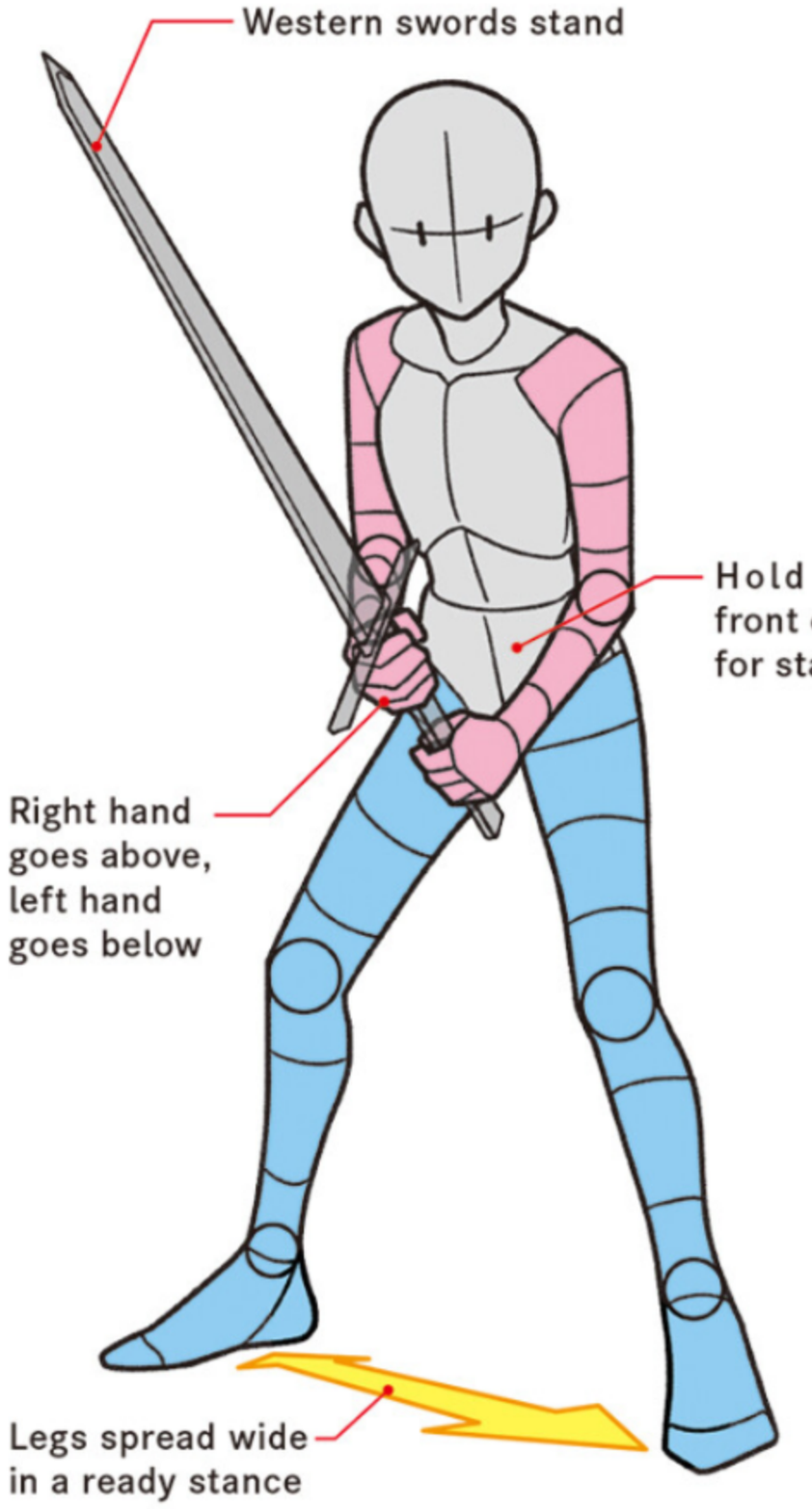
Weapons

Poses with weapons are essential for action scenes. The pose changes depending on what weapon is used, since the basic stance and how you hold the weapon will be different. Here, we will only show swords, with different sword poses to match different characters.

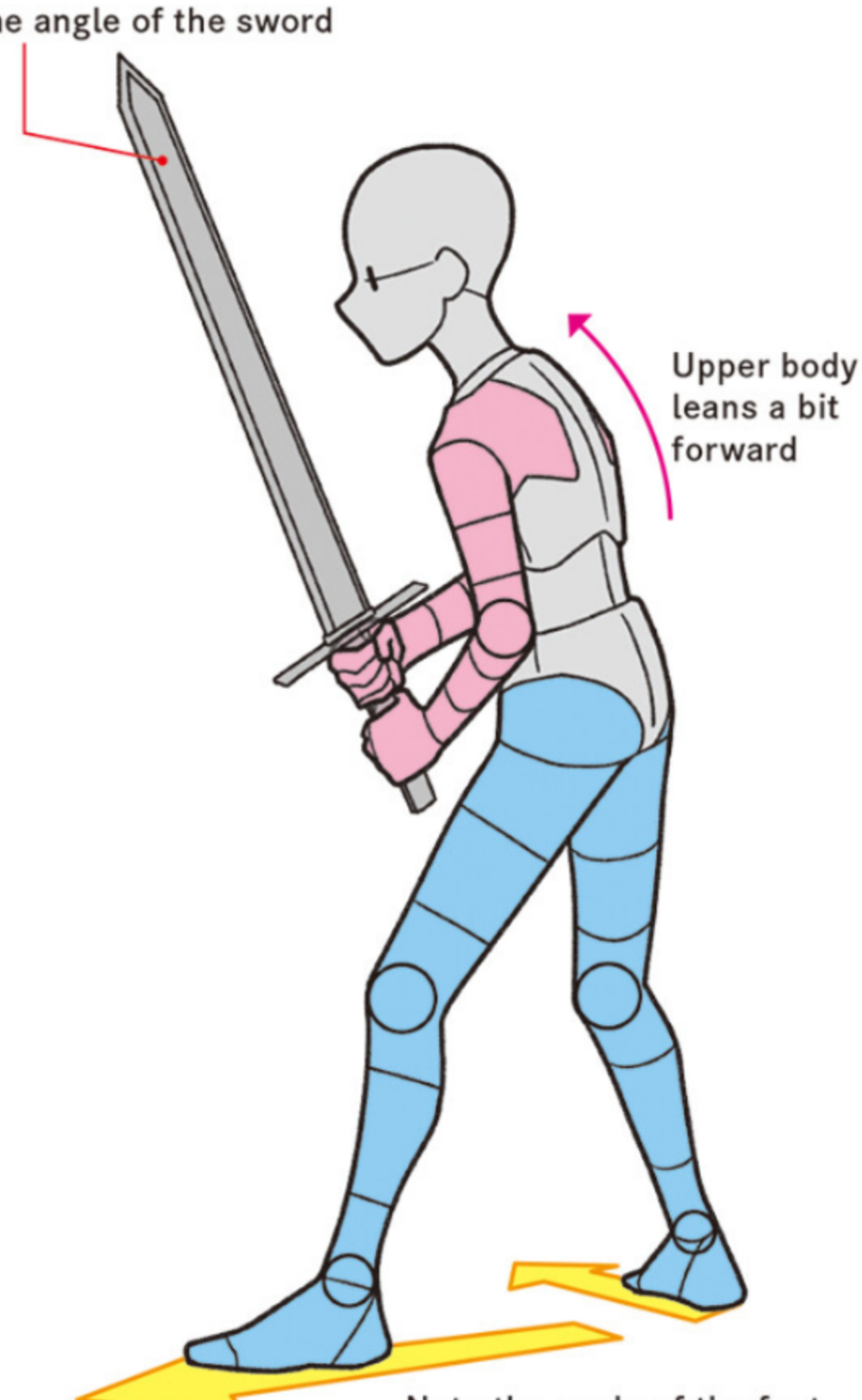
Keep Stances Stable

We showed stances for punches and kicks earlier. While stances for weapons will change depending on the type of weapon, the basic idea is the same. You should be able to go right into an attack from the basic stance. That means it's important to make the stance stable. For heavy weapons, it will look unnatural if the center of gravity isn't in the lower body. For the slashing pose, note how the lower body's stability changes depending on the weapon.

Stance



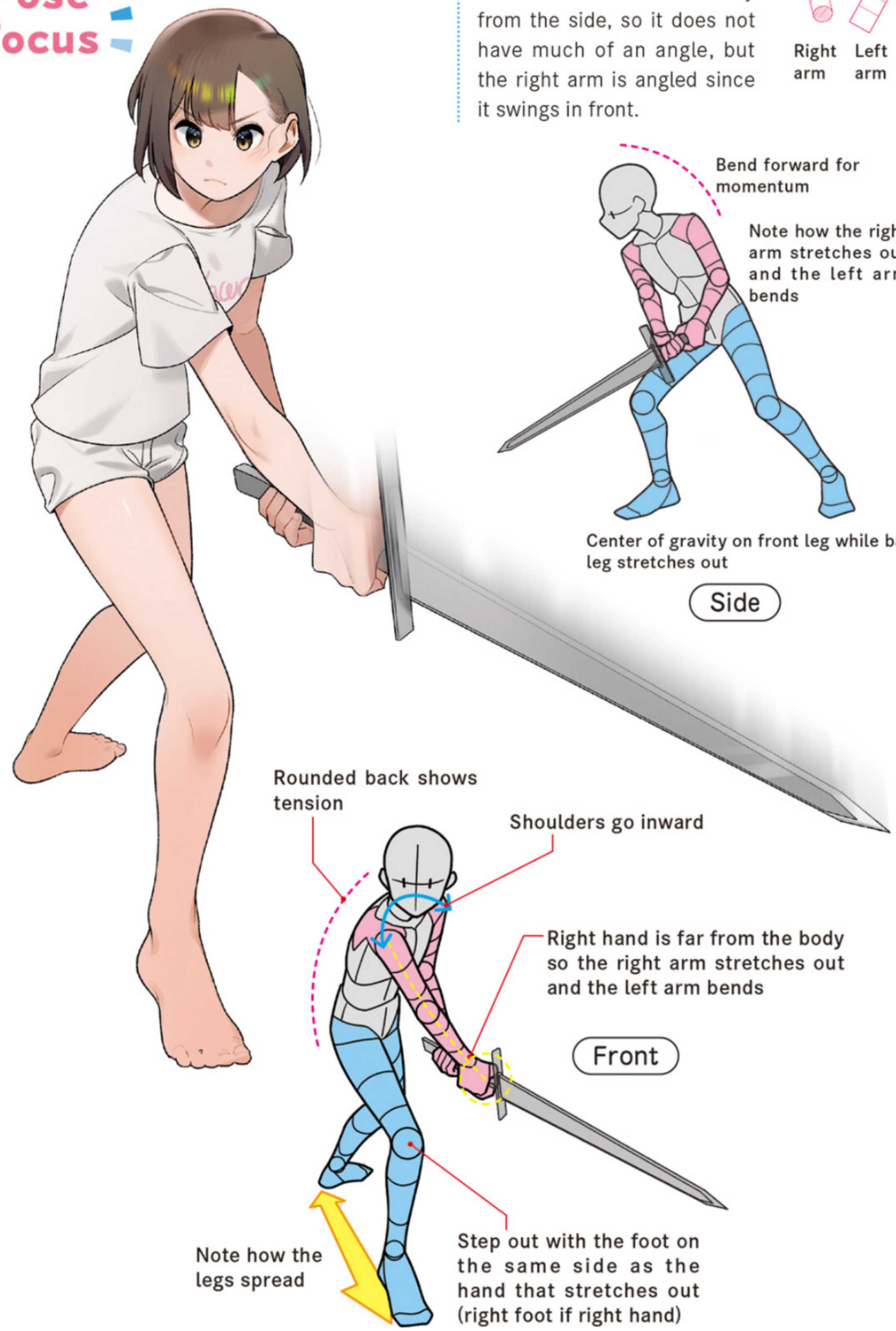
Front



Side

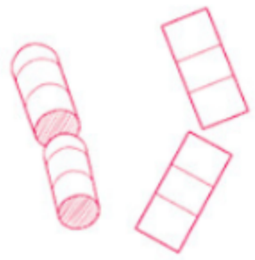
Slash

Pose Focus



Note the angle of the arms

Note the angle of the sword as it swings through the air. The left arm is seen directly from the side, so it does not have much of an angle, but the right arm is angled since it swings in front.



Male and Female Pose Differences

We have stance (swing) and post-attack poses for each personality. Note the series of movements in each pose.

Attack

Active Type & Large Sword

The more the body turns, the more you anticipate the next attack

The hips are lowered, which makes the pose look heavy. The upper body twists a lot to show the character wielding a large weapon deftly.

Lower the center of gravity to balance the heavy weapon by lowering the hips

Bend the knees and spread the legs to support the heavy weight

Large creases from the arm to the back

Creases in the direction of the twist

Swing down a weapon with vigor to show strength

Pull shoulders inward to put strength in the swing

Tense, rounded back

Pay attention to the shoulder silhouette and the pose will look cool

Right arm stretches out and left arm bends when swinging

Put weight on the left foot and swing to the left side of the body

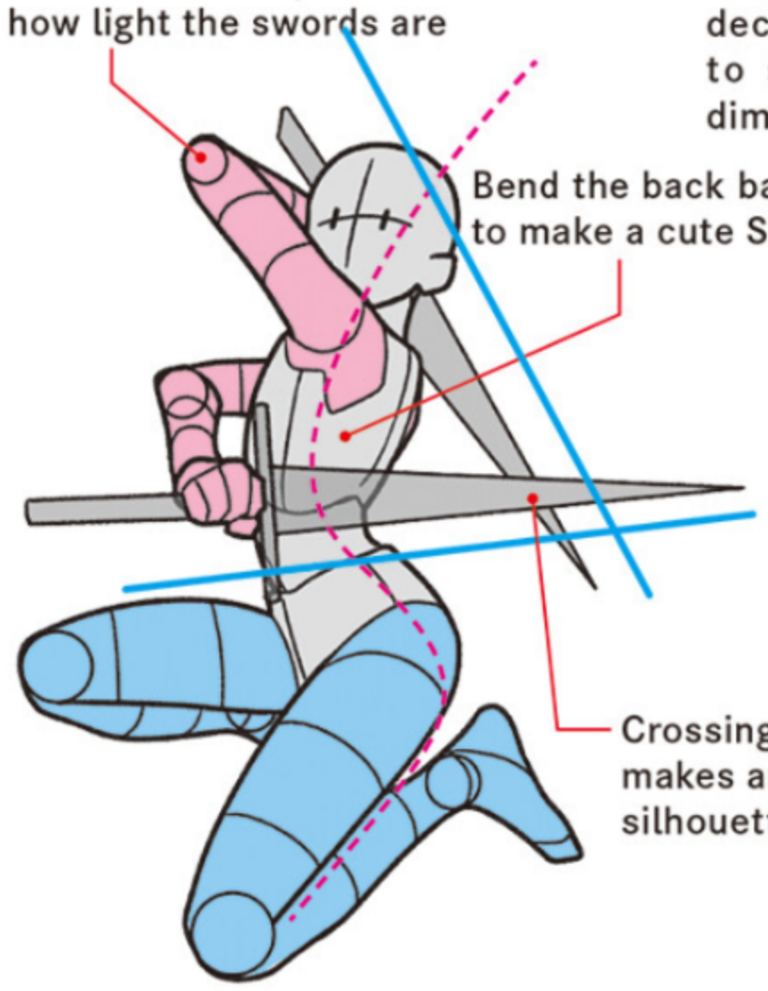
Spread legs for stability

Center of gravity shifts toward the side with the large sword

Arms and knees should stay tense, since slack arms don't look cool

Large sword swings down to the ground for a striking pose

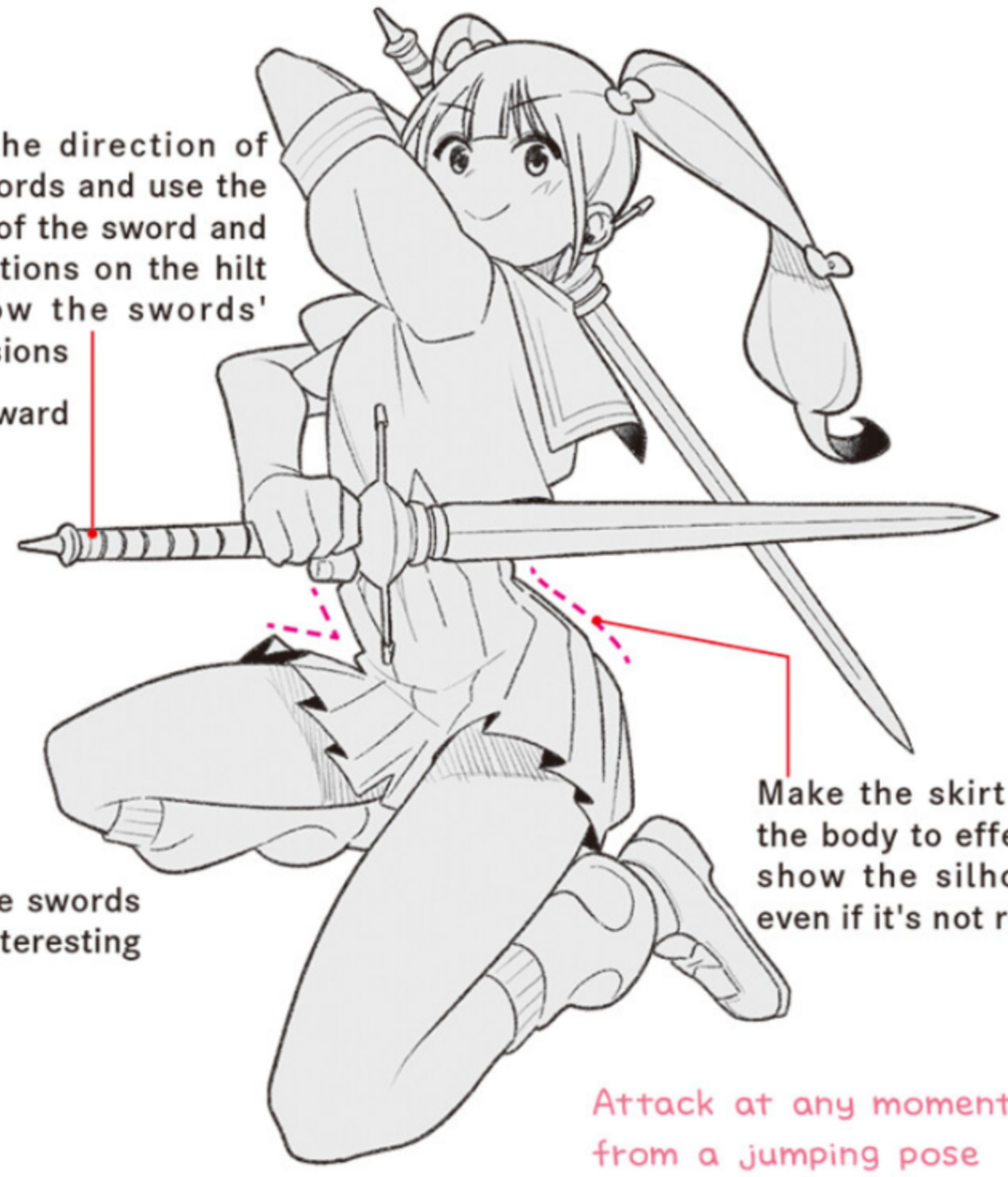
Active Type & Twin Swords



Twist the body and cross the arms as far as you can to show how light the swords are

Bend the back backward to make a cute S

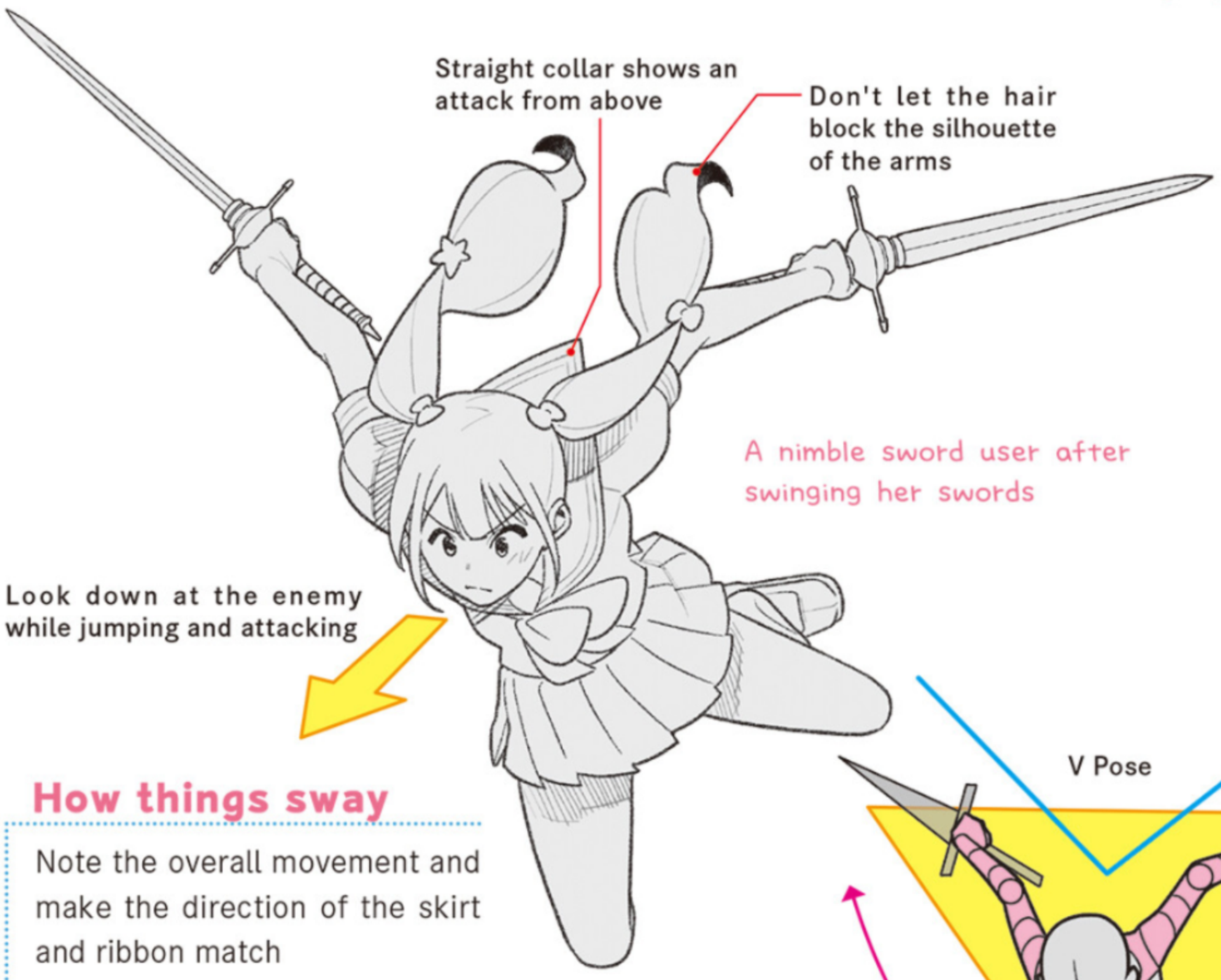
Crossing the swords makes an interesting silhouette



Note the direction of the swords and use the shape of the sword and decorations on the hilt to show the swords' dimensions

Make the skirt follow the body to effectively show the silhouette, even if it's not realistic

Attack at any moment from a jumping pose

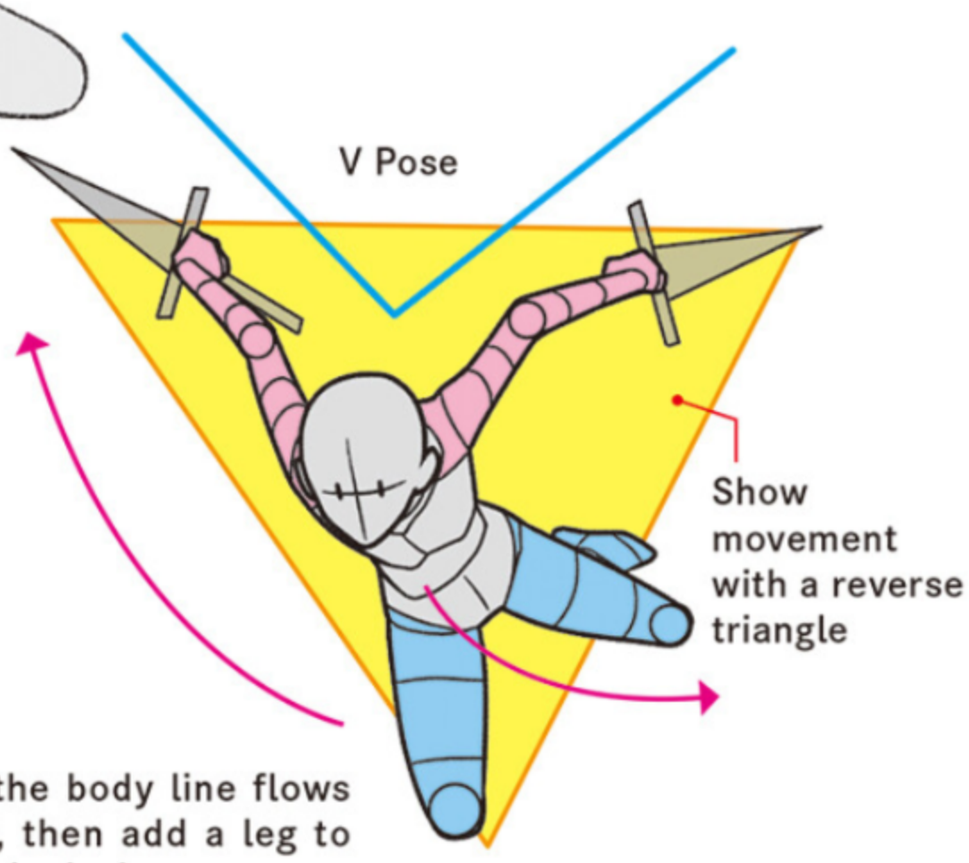


Straight collar shows an attack from above

Don't let the hair block the silhouette of the arms

A nimble sword user after swinging her swords

Look down at the enemy while jumping and attacking



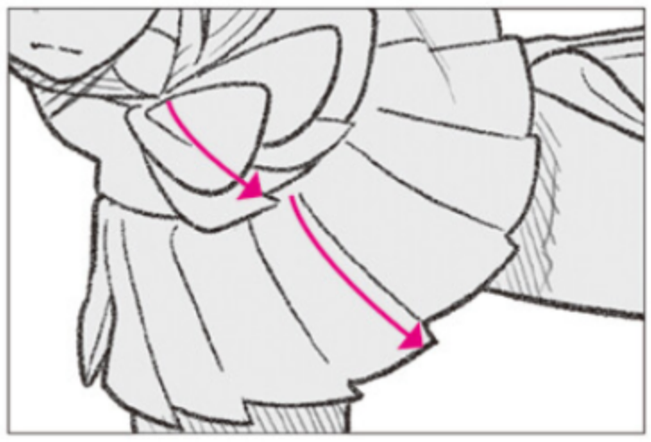
V Pose

Show movement with a reverse triangle

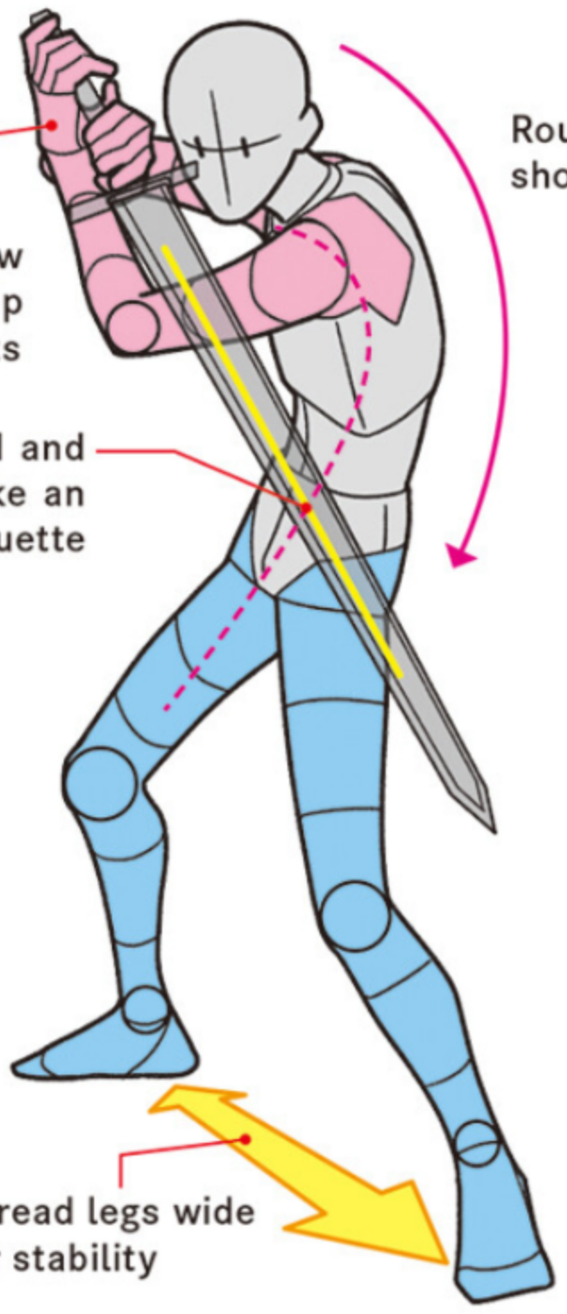
Note how the body line flows to the left, then add a leg to the right to look showy

How things sway

Note the overall movement and make the direction of the skirt and ribbon match



Cool Type & Long Sword

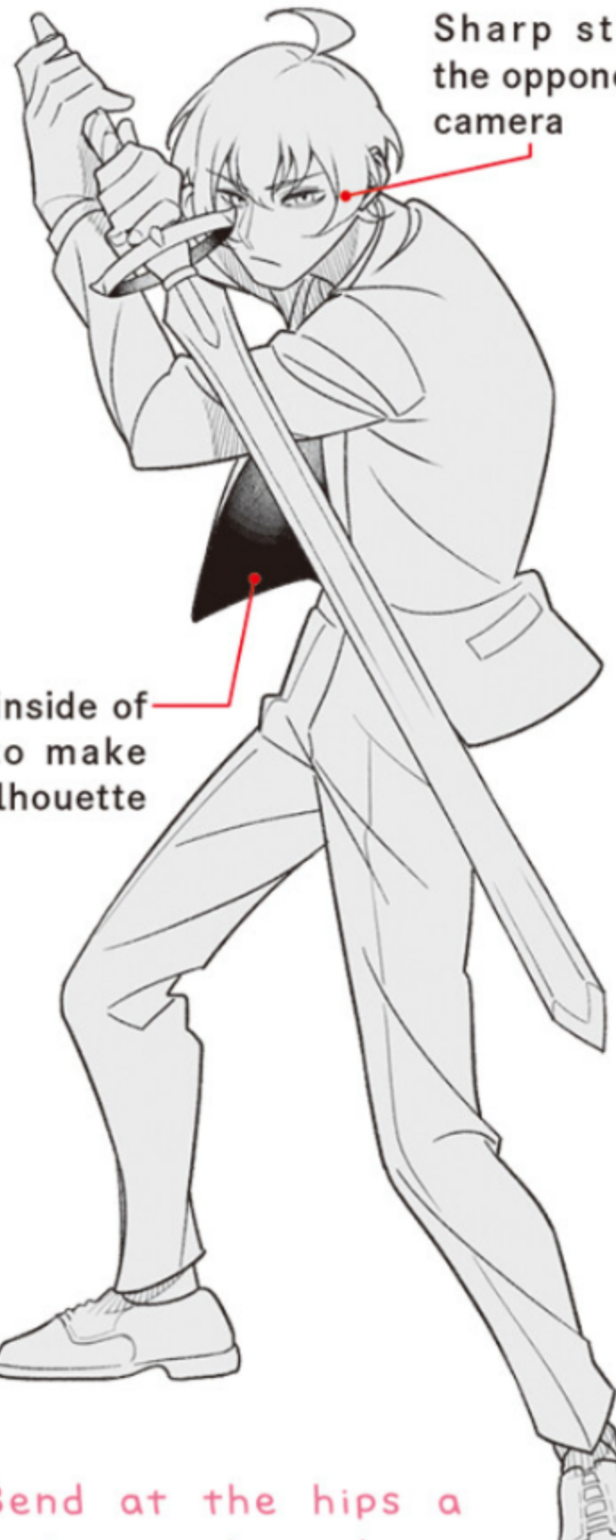


This angle doesn't allow the left hand to grip tightly so it just supports

Cross the sword and the body to make an interesting silhouette

Rounded back to show strength

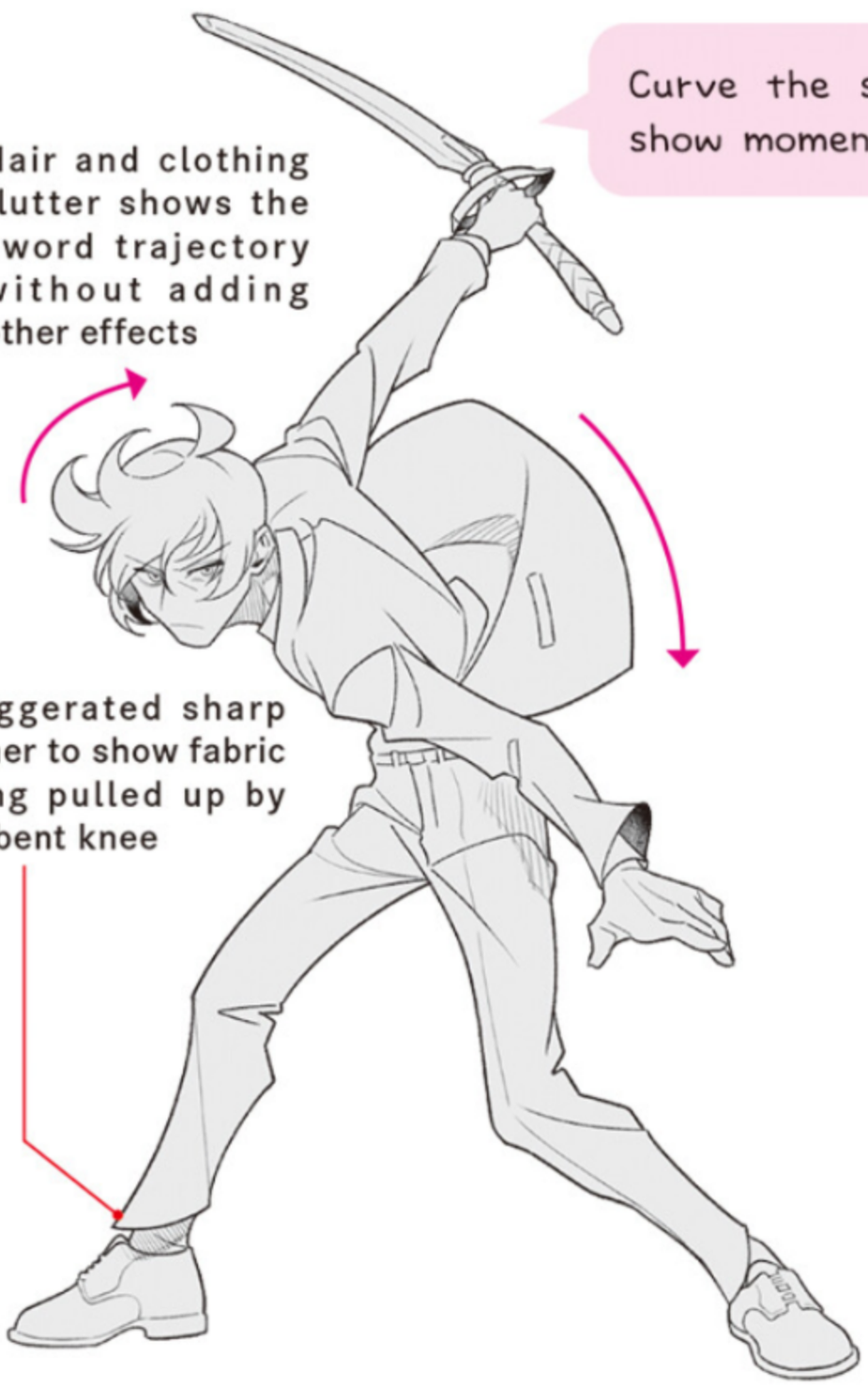
Spread legs wide for stability



Sharp stare at the opponent and camera

Color in the inside of the jacket to make the sword silhouette stand out

Bend at the hips a little to make a showy sword stance

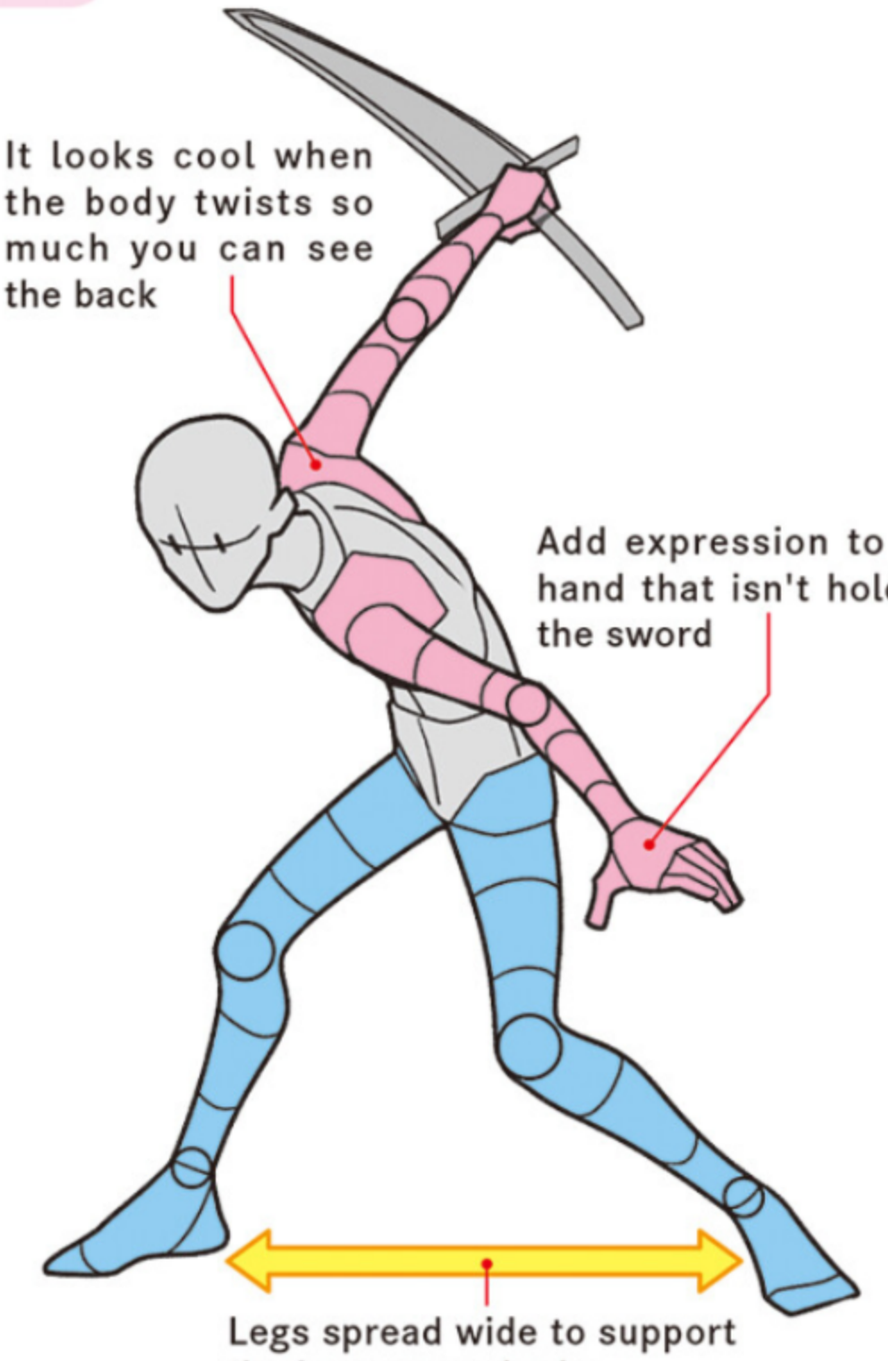


Curve the sword to show momentum.

Hair and clothing flutter shows the sword trajectory without adding other effects

Exaggerated sharp corner to show fabric being pulled up by the bent knee

A powerful swing showing momentum through the curved sword and fluttering hair and clothing



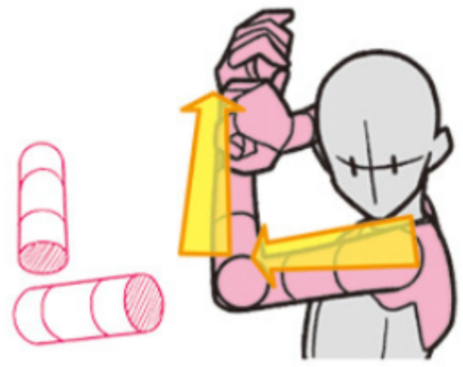
It looks cool when the body twists so much you can see the back

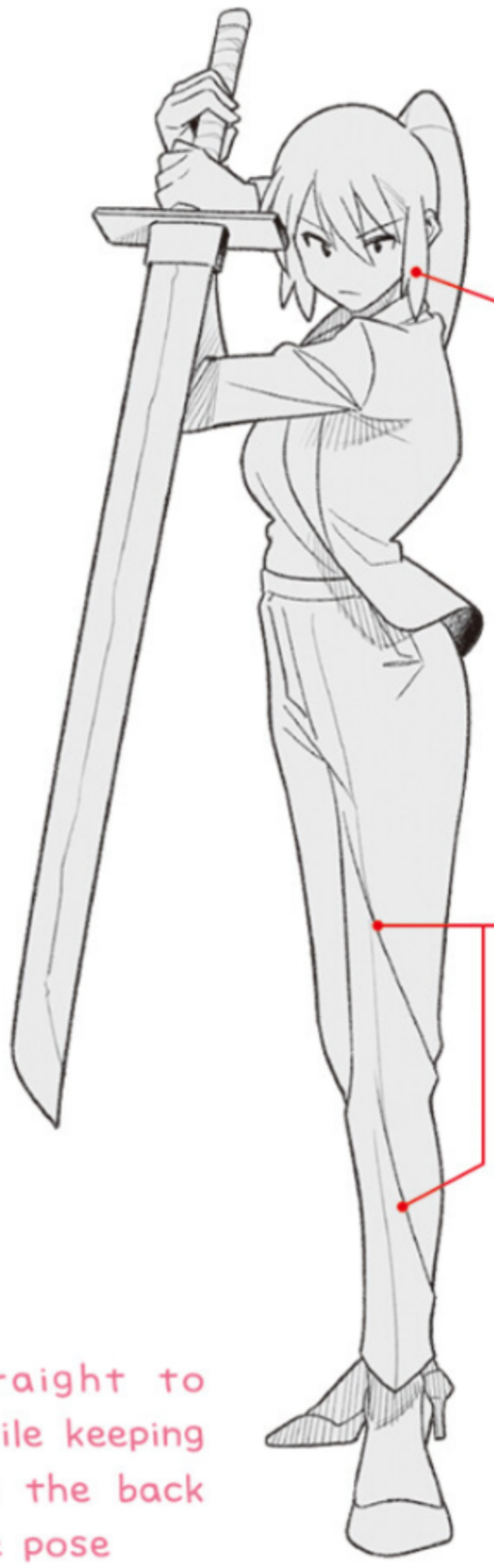
Add expression to the hand that isn't holding the sword

Legs spread wide to support the bent upper body

Pay attention to complex depths

The left arm in the foreground has a different depth for the upper arm compared to the forearm. Look at the model carefully.





Looking down at the opponent

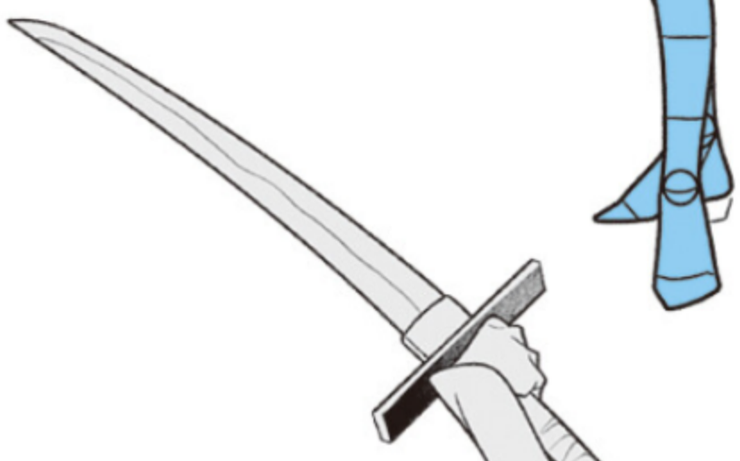
Keep the silhouette simple and don't angle the sword too much

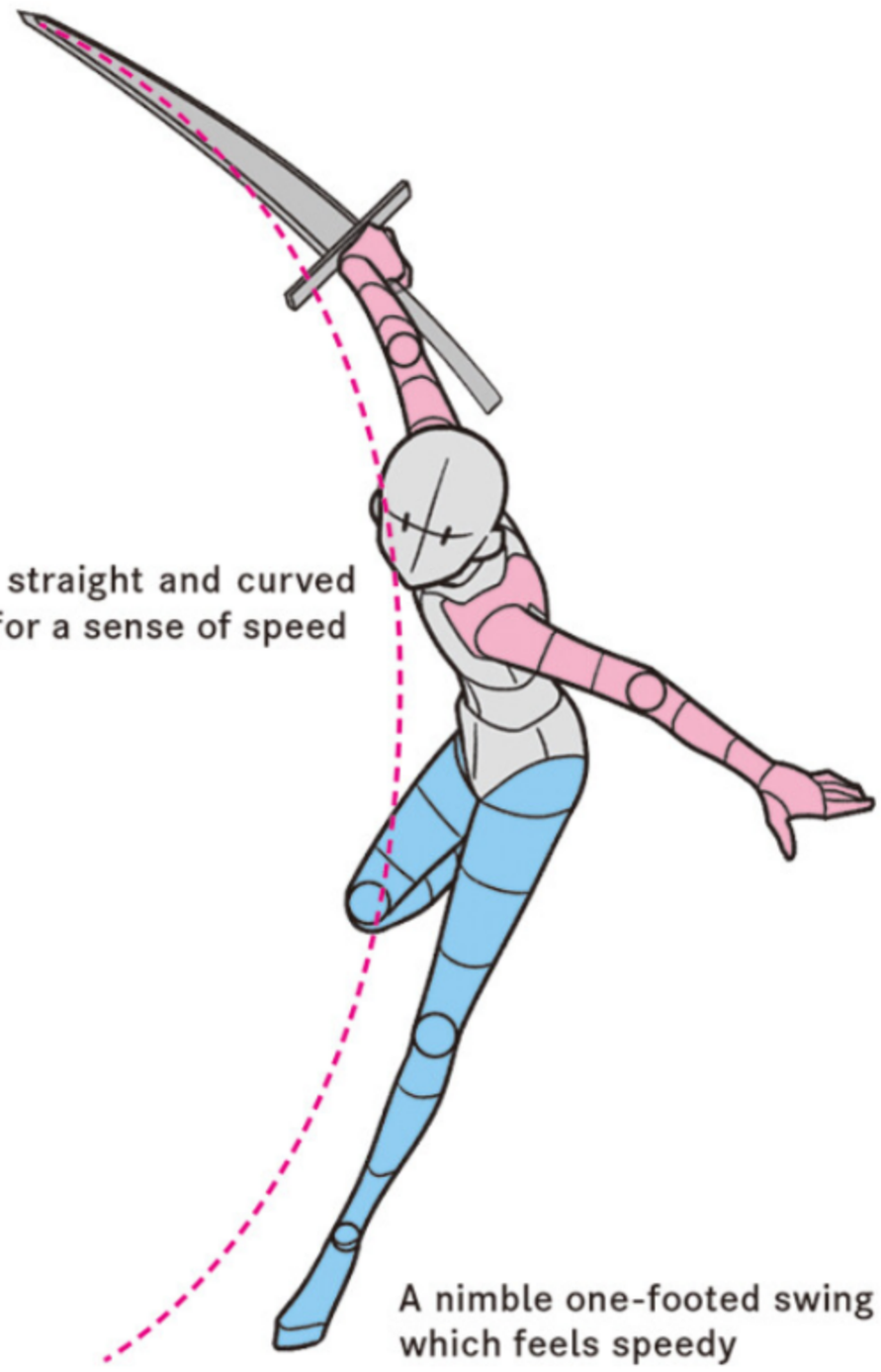
Creases where the body twists

Standing straight to look smart while keeping an S-shape in the back for a feminine pose

Use straight lines while keeping the feminine line of the spine

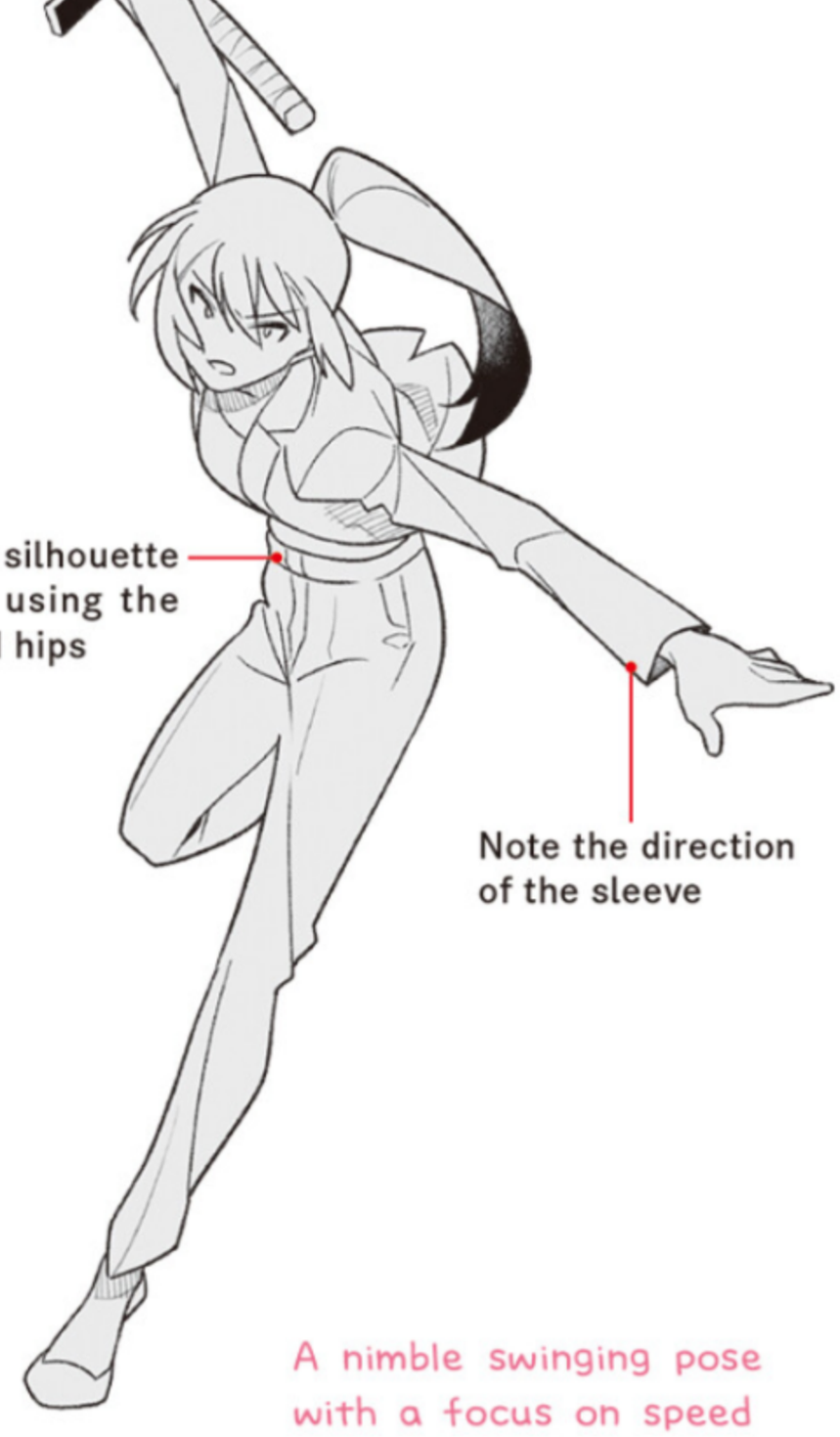
Legs stretch out for a straight silhouette





Large straight and curved lines for a sense of speed

A nimble one-footed swing which feels speedy



Make the silhouette dynamic using the chest and hips

Note the direction of the sleeve

A nimble swinging pose with a focus on speed

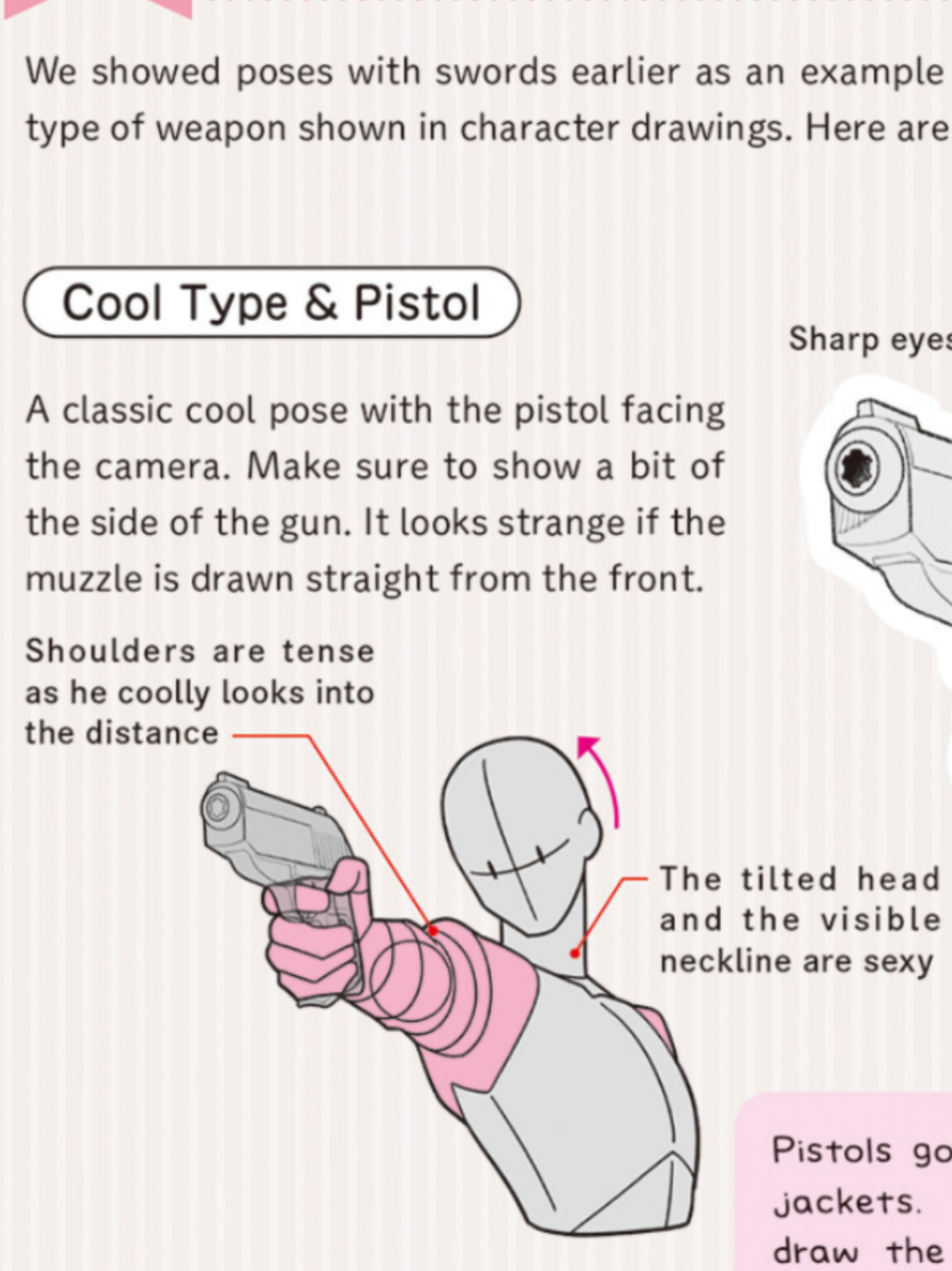
Column

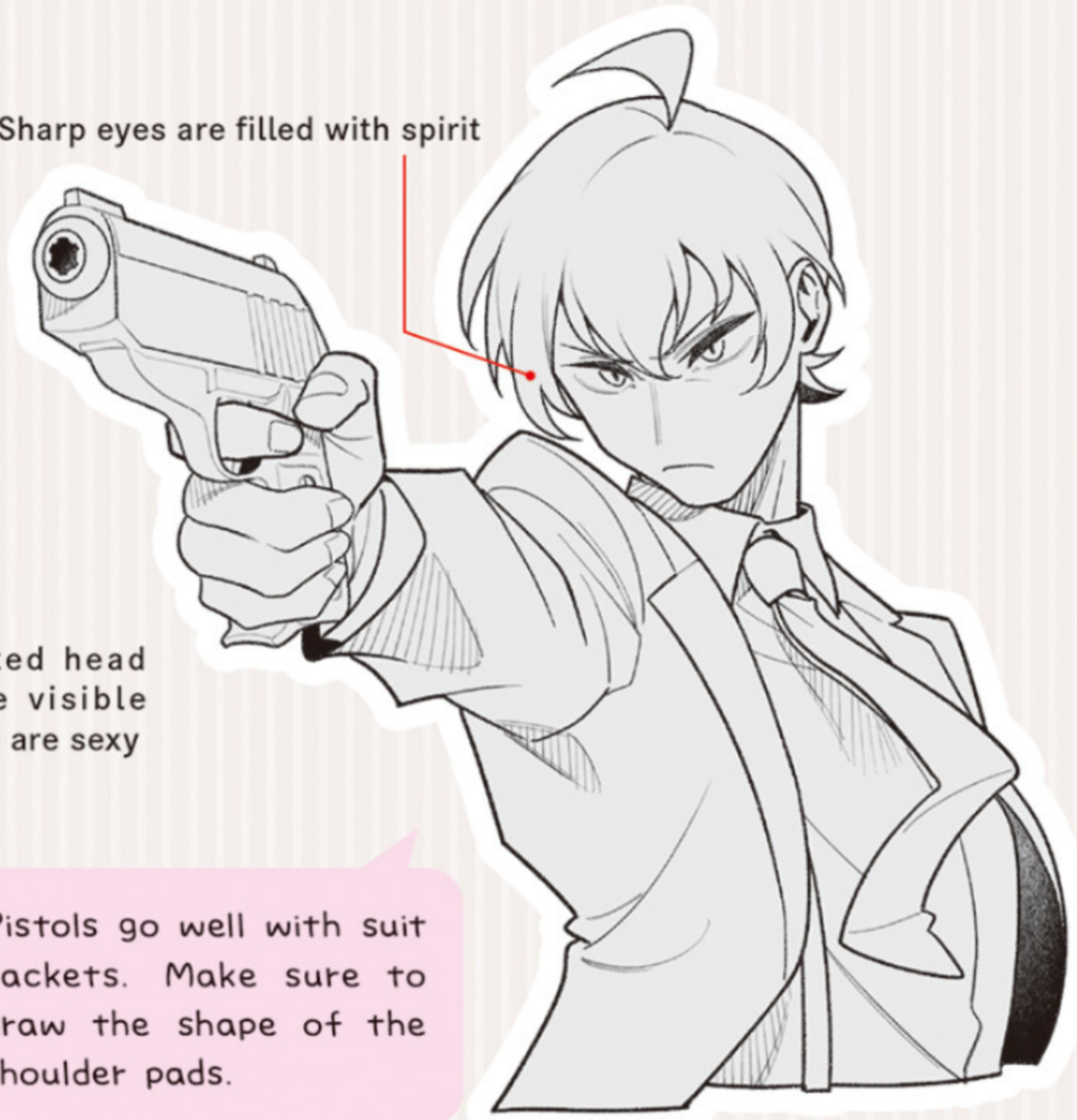
Guns

We showed poses with swords earlier as an example of weapons, and guns are another common type of weapon shown in character drawings. Here are four types of characters with guns.

Cool Type & Pistol

A classic cool pose with the pistol facing the camera. Make sure to show a bit of the side of the gun. It looks strange if the muzzle is drawn straight from the front.



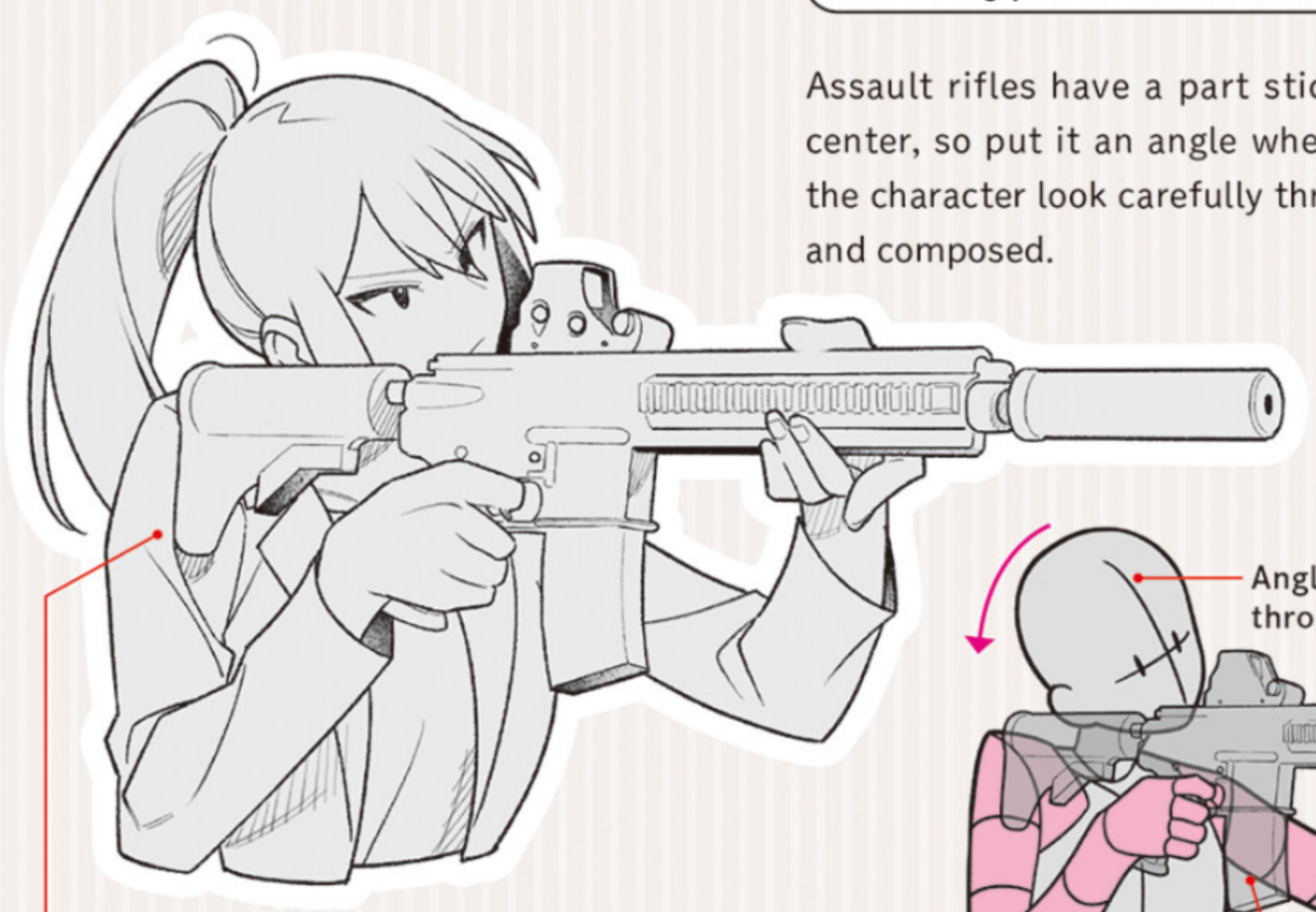


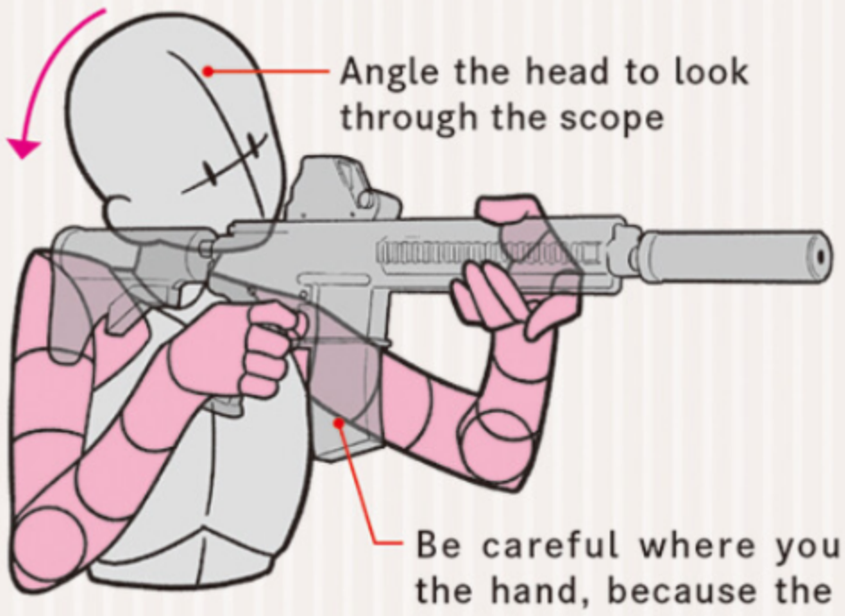
Pistols go well with suit jackets. Make sure to draw the shape of the shoulder pads.

There's more info on the pistol and cool type pose on p. 154

Cool Type & Assault Rifle

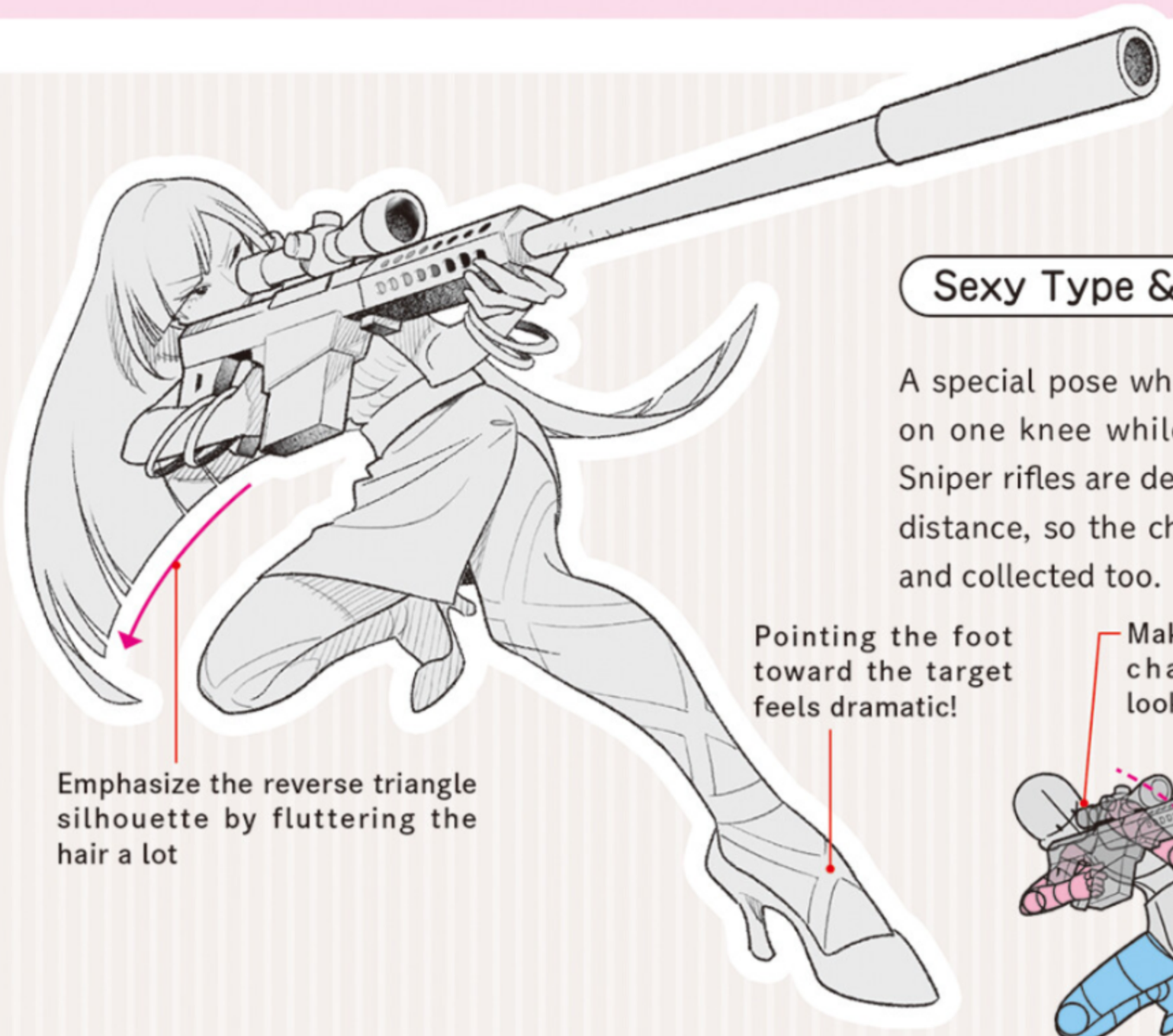
Assault rifles have a part sticking out below from the center, so put it an angle where you can see it. Making the character look carefully through the scope looks cool and composed.

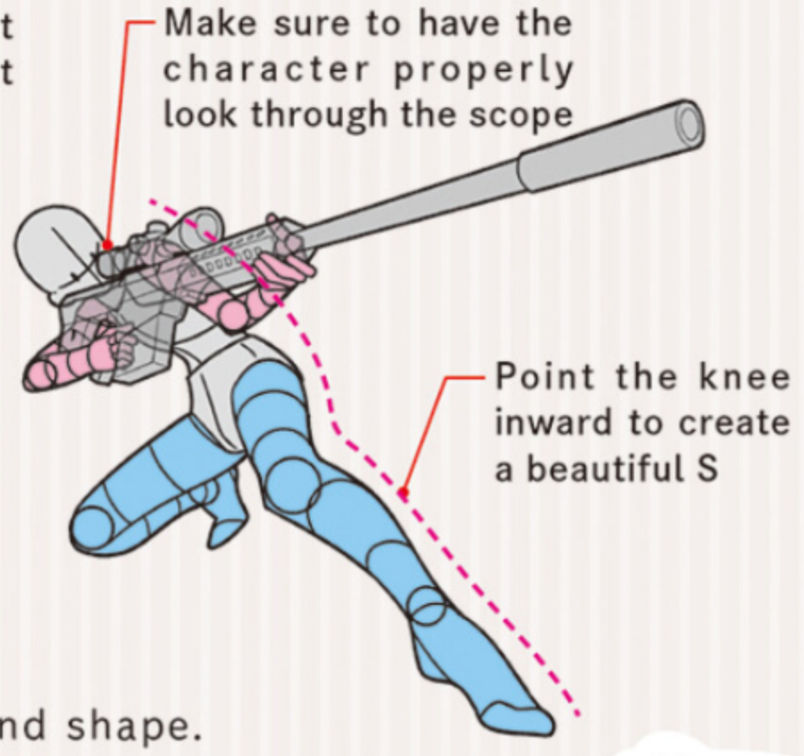




Sexy Type & Sniper Rifle

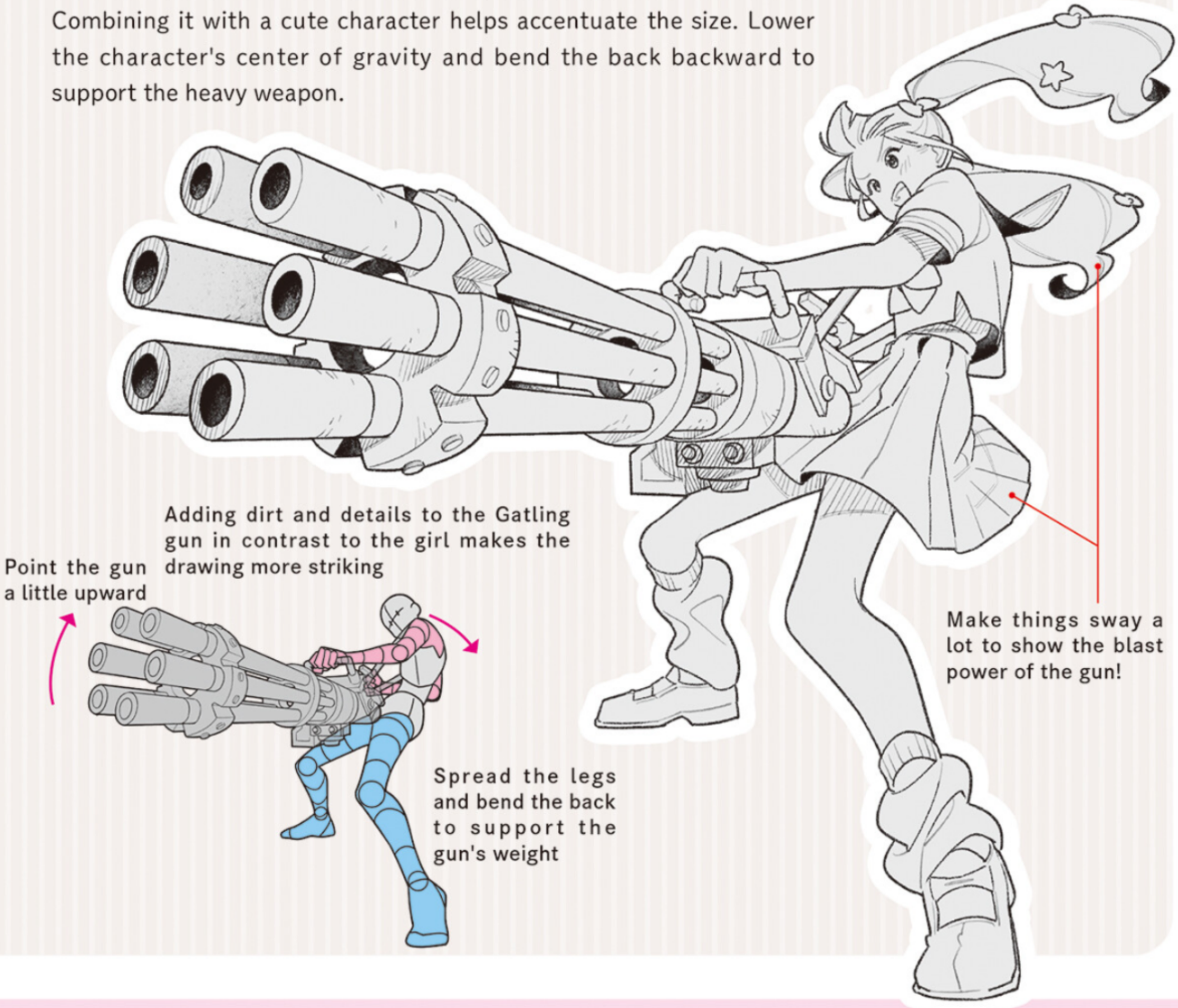
A special pose where the character stands on one knee while holding a sniper rifle. Sniper rifles are designed to aim far into the distance, so the character should feel calm and collected too.





Active Type & Gatling Gun

The Gatling gun is drawn with an exaggerated size and shape. Combining it with a cute character helps accentuate the size. Lower the character's center of gravity and bend the back backward to support the heavy weapon.



Chapter 2

12

Action Poses

Special Effects

These poses show supernatural and magical effects that you need for fantasy settings. Match the direction and feeling of the poses and effects while keeping in mind that the characters and effects form a single silhouette.

Make the Most of Effects

While they are all referred to as effects here, there are many different kinds of effects. There are natural effects like the flow of sand and wind, and there are visualizations of invisible power like magic and strength. Here we will show three examples: an impact effect with power charging up, an aura effect controlling magic, and a release effect for shooting out shockwaves and magic.

Effect Patterns

Since it's hard to show power charging up with just an effect, show it through the pose, like with clenched fists

At a slight angle instead of facing directly in front for a dramatic pose

Large straight lines to show speed

Create a shape combining both the effect and the character, like with the weapon pose.

Release

Impact

Feet firmly apart for stability to withstand the impact from the ground

Pose Focus

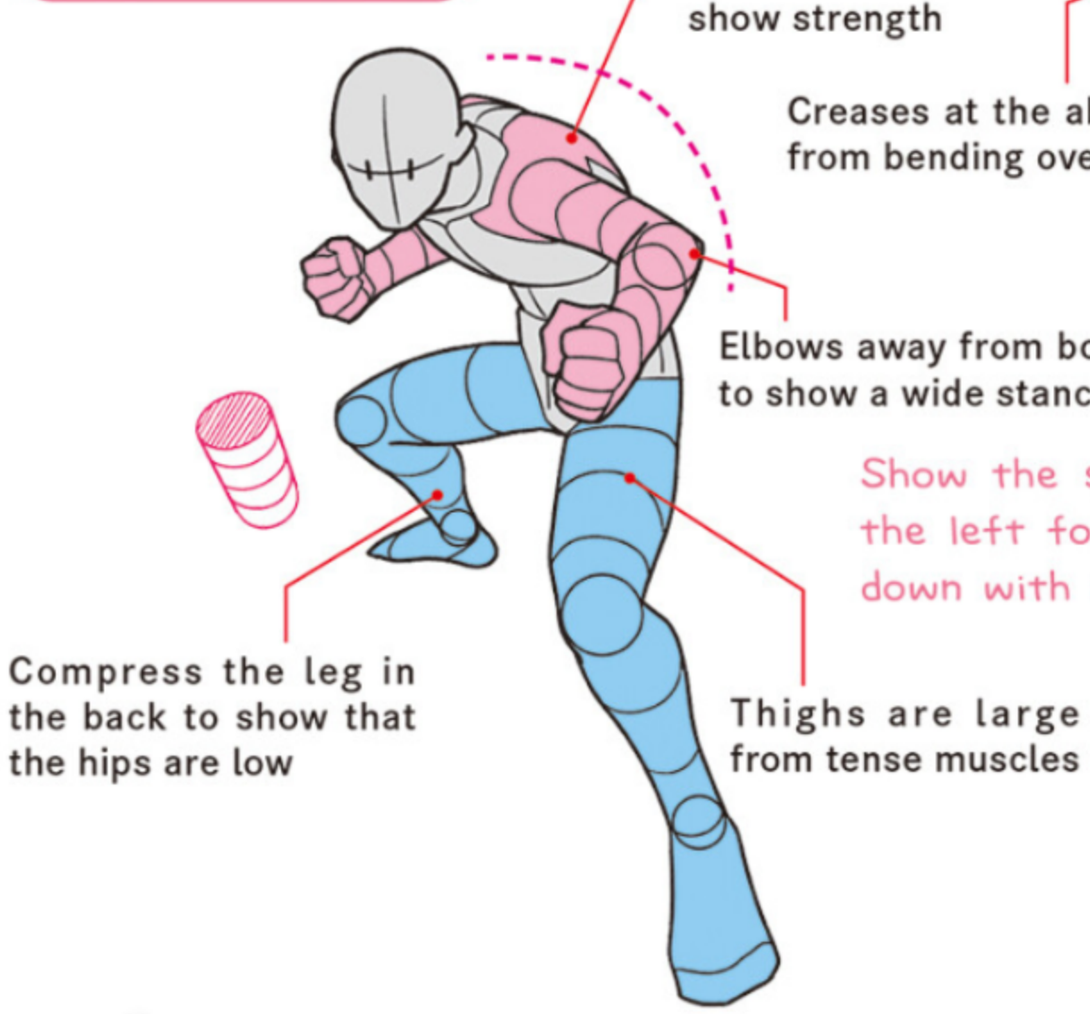
Importance of poses

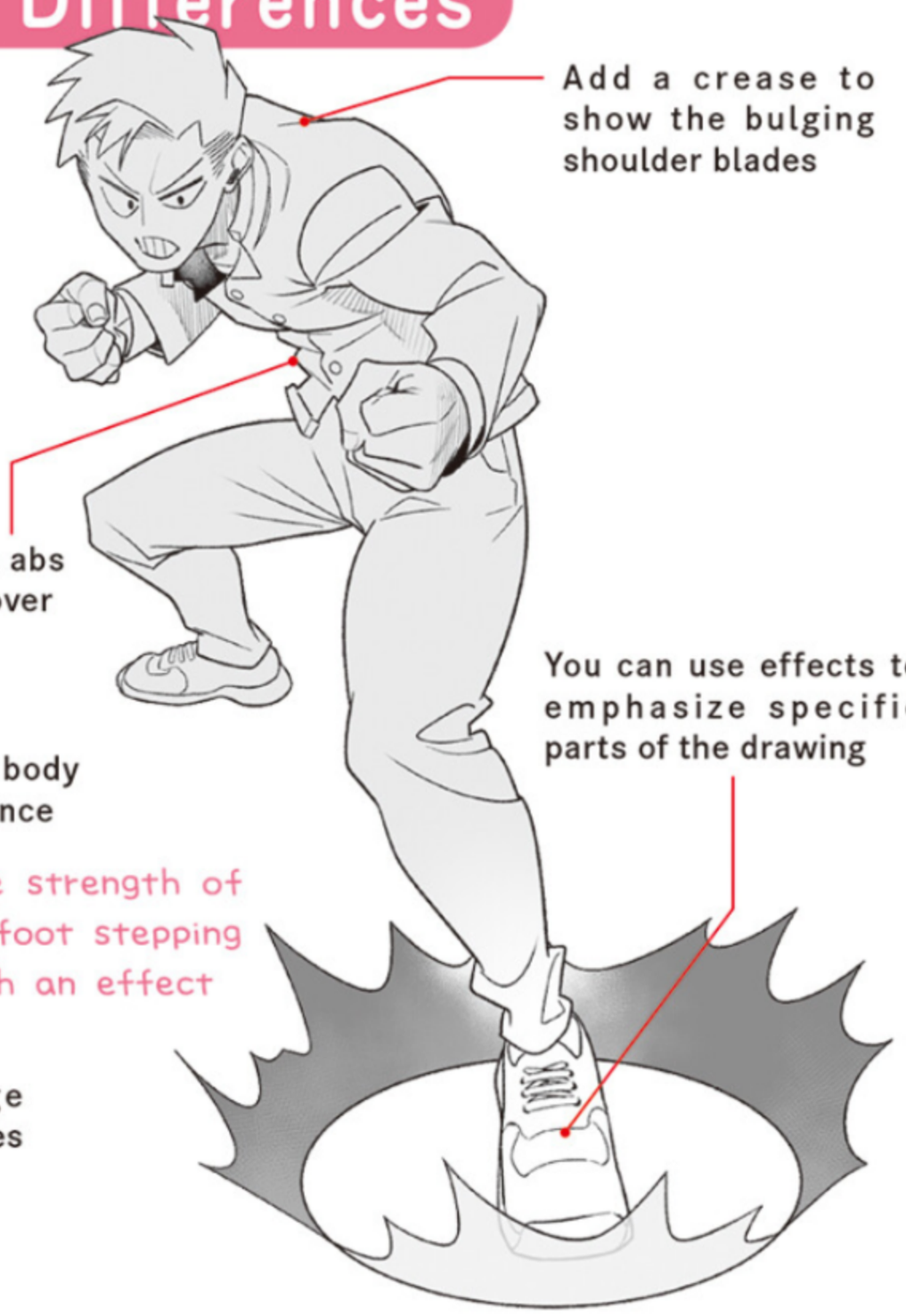
You can show stronger or weaker effects by using different poses, even for the same effect. Be aware of whether the character is using their full strength in the pose.

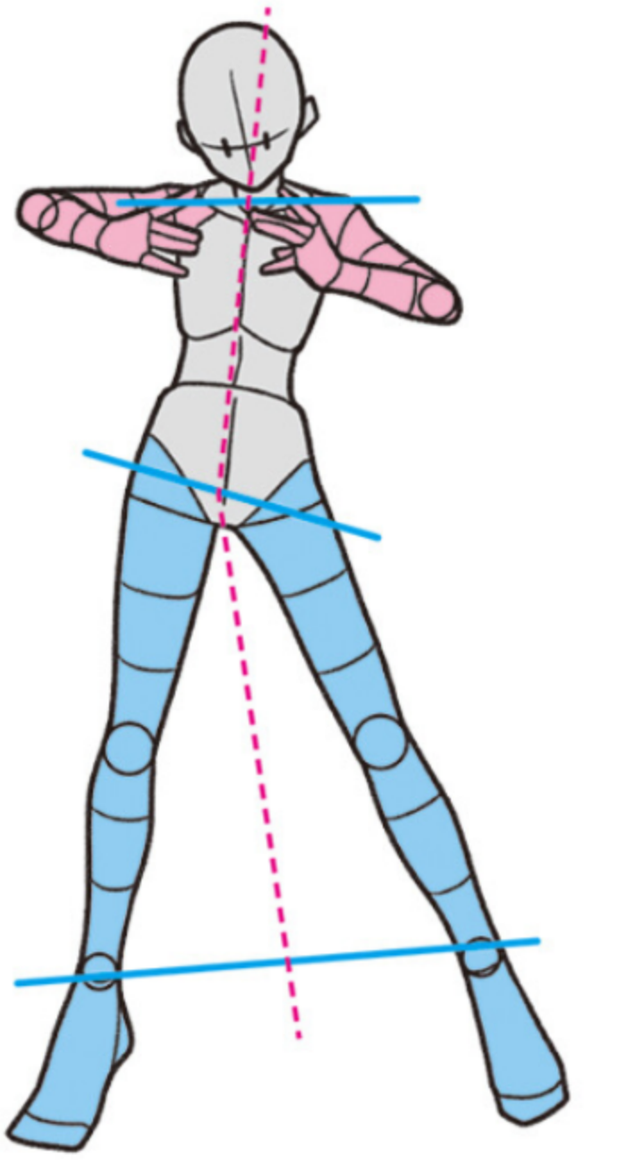
Male and Female Pose Differences

You have a lot of freedom in this pose which shows an unknown power. You can also focus on showing the character's personality instead of trying to make the drawing realistic!

Active Type

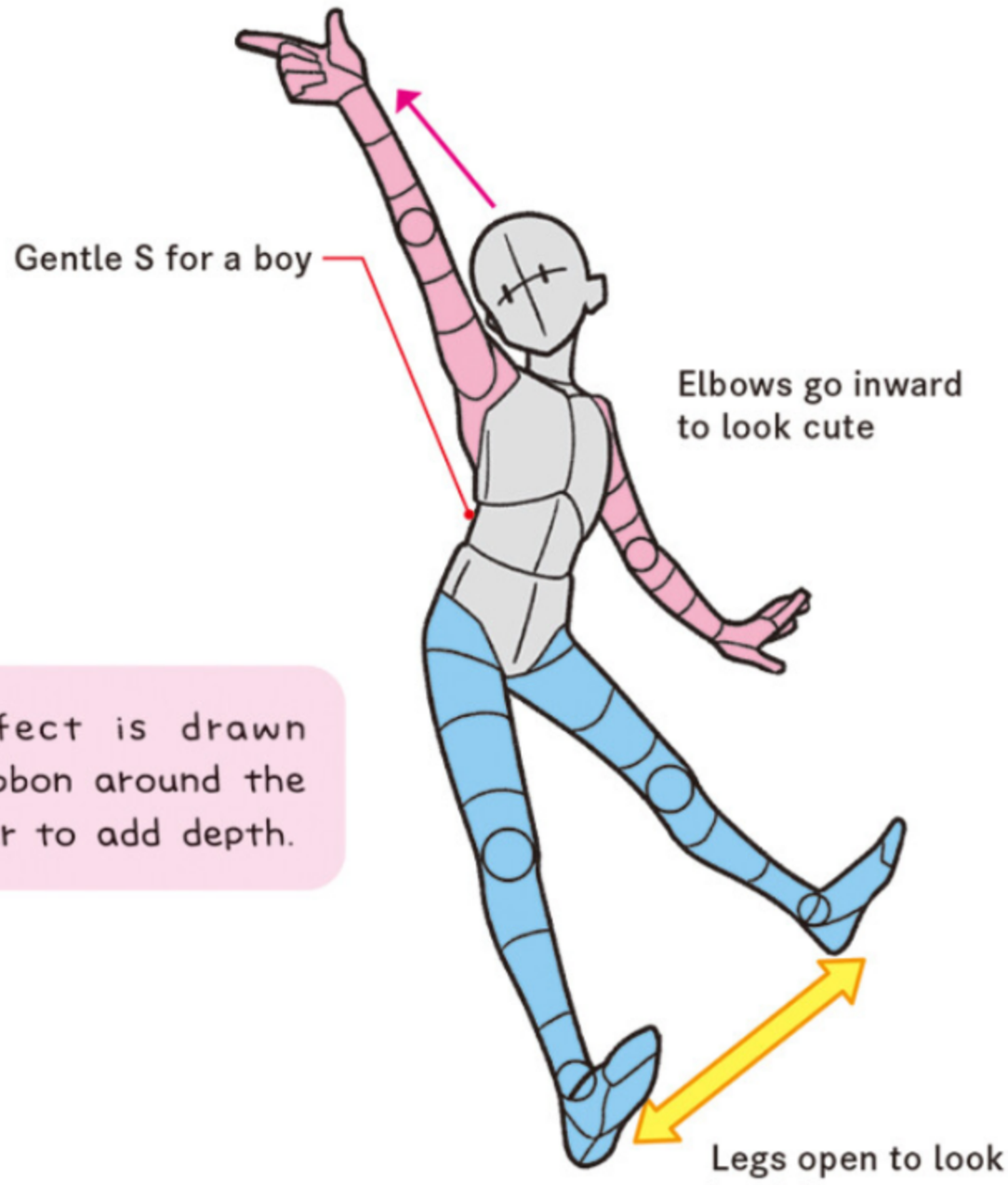


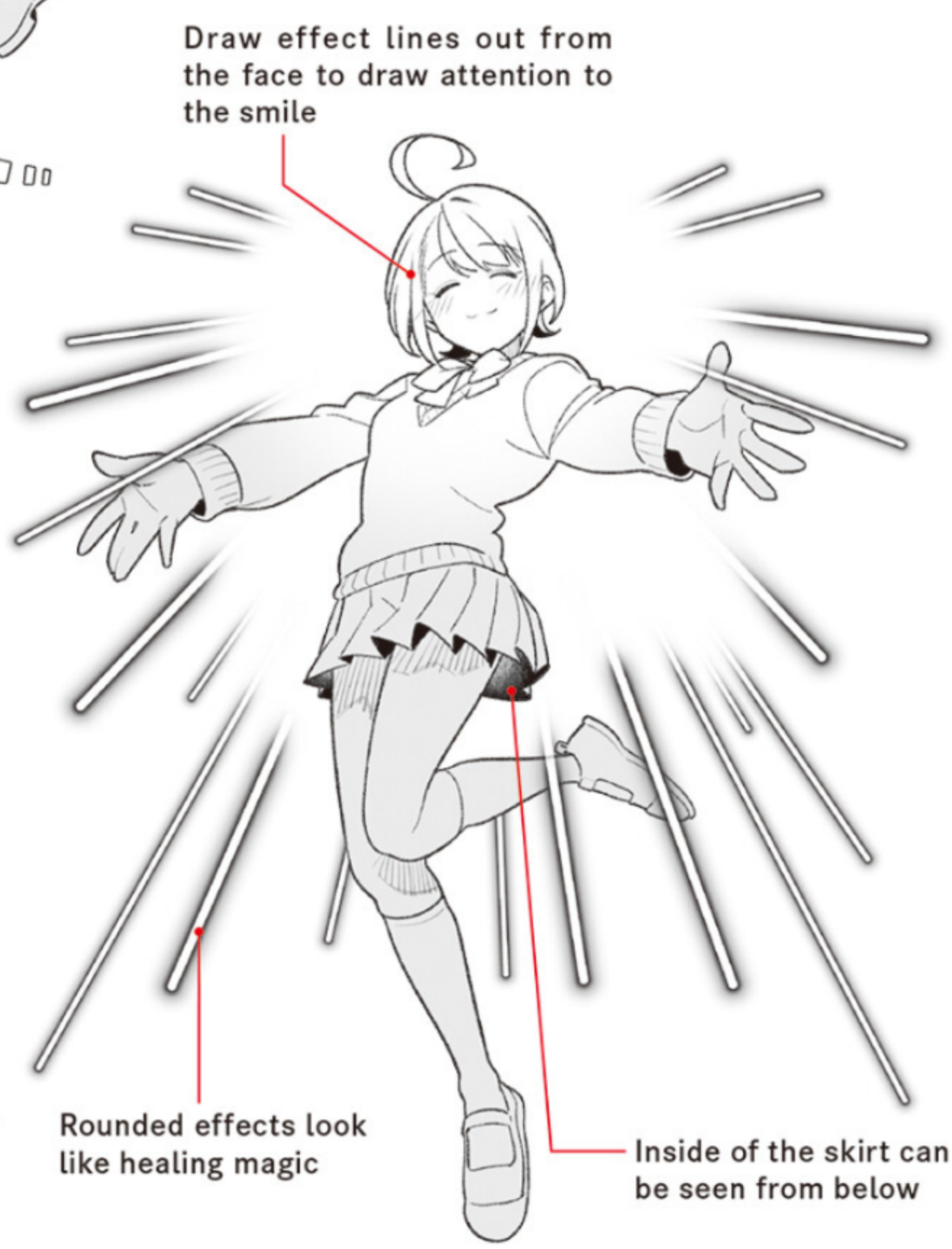




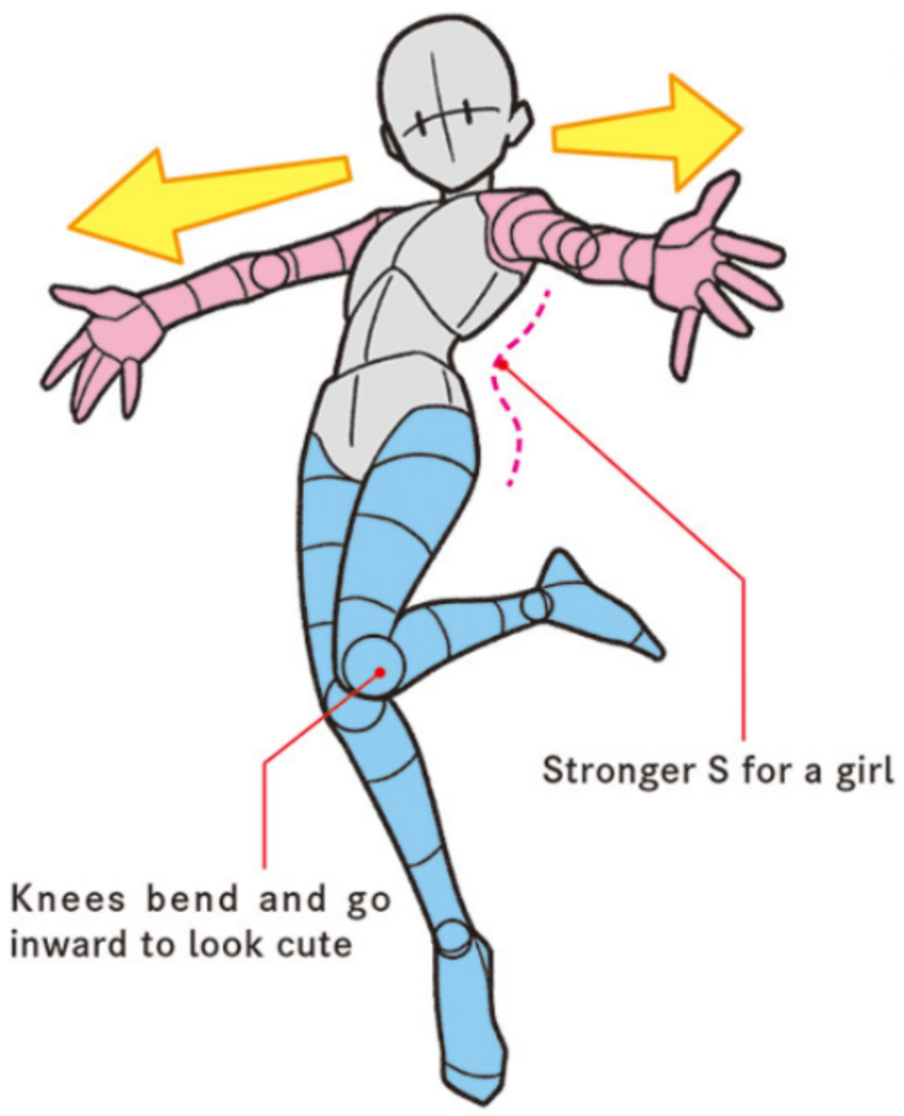
Cute Type

A pose showing a right hand using magic freely

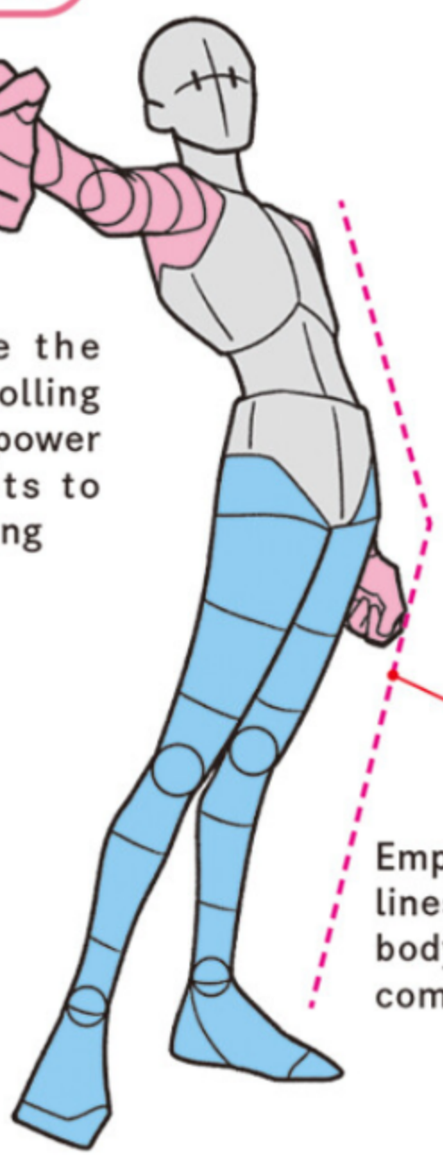




A pose releasing luminous power

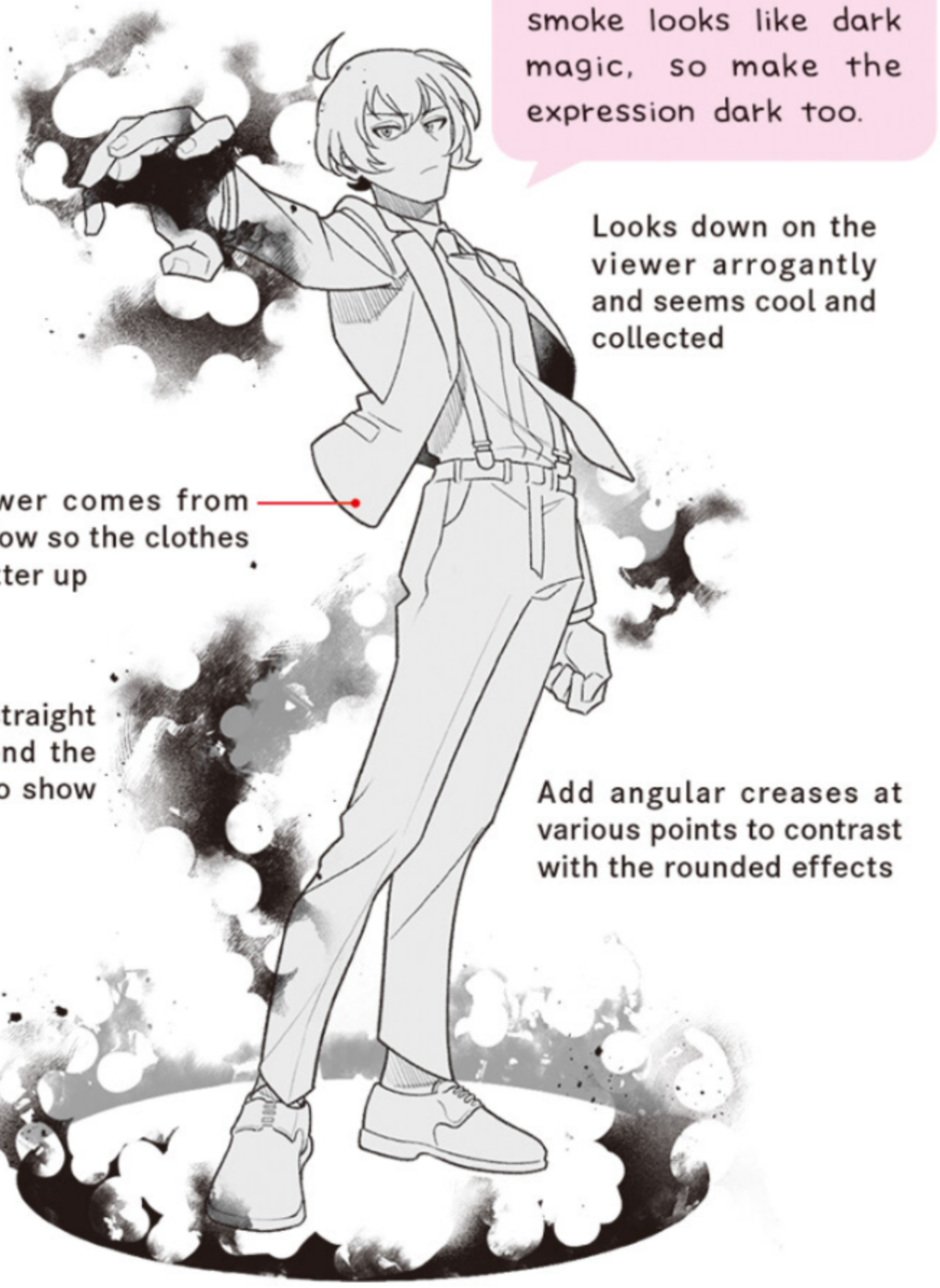


Cool Type



It looks like the hand is controlling some kind of power as it attempts to grasp something

Emphasize straight lines but bend the body back to show composure



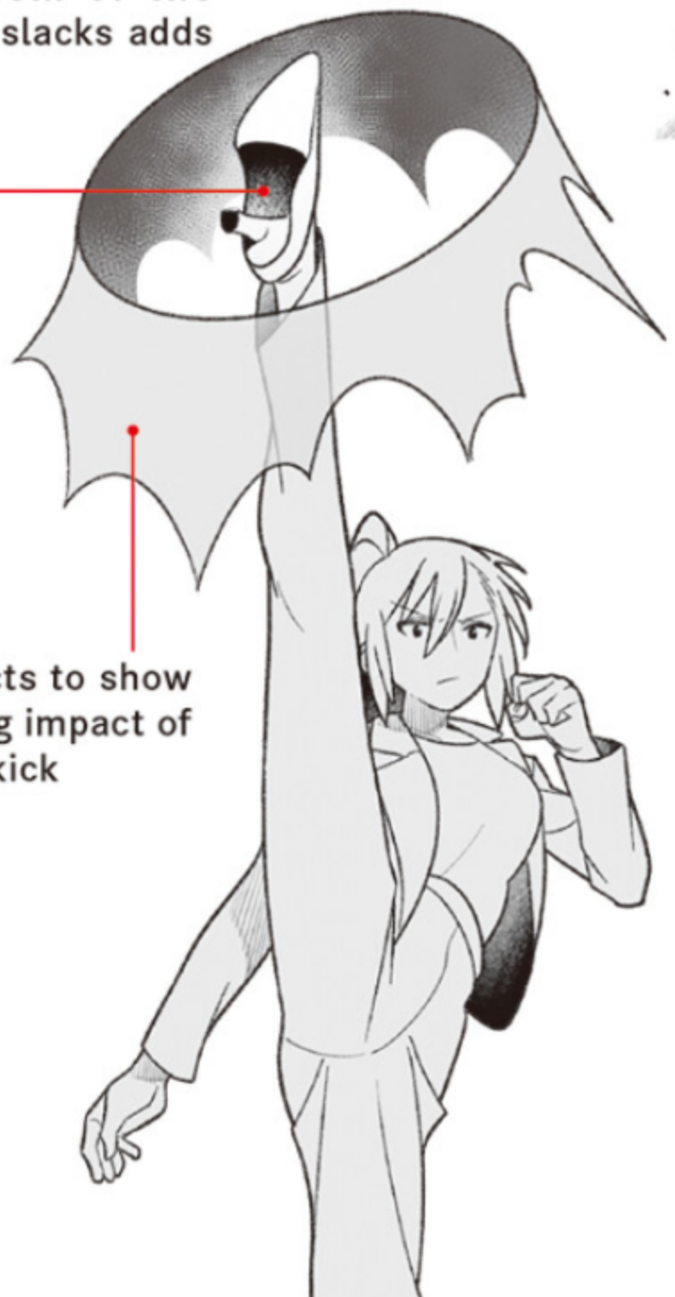
The unnatural black smoke looks like dark magic, so make the expression dark too.

Looks down on the viewer arrogantly and seems cool and collected

Power comes from below so the clothes flutter up

Add angular creases at various points to contrast with the rounded effects

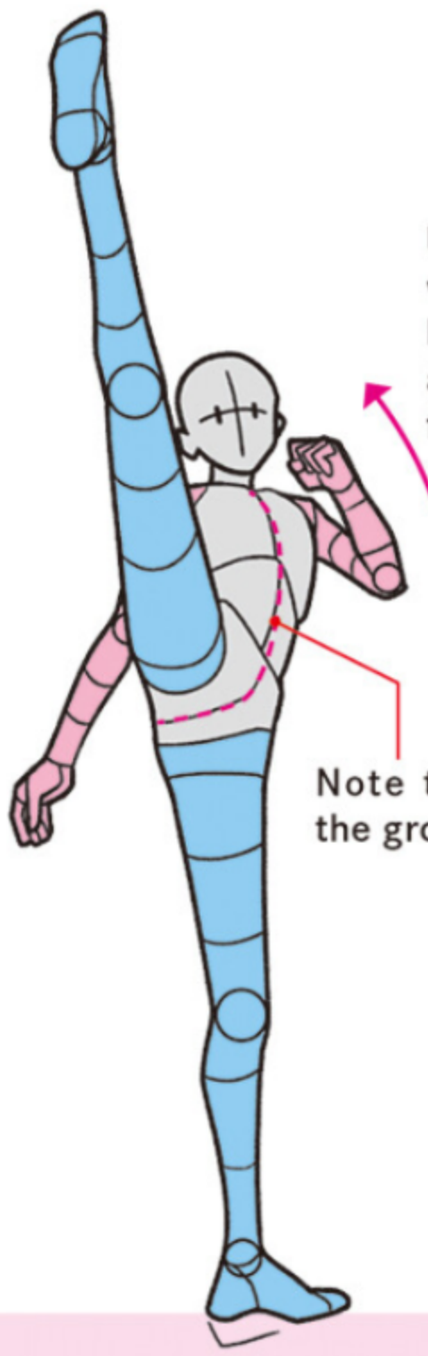
Carefully showing the bottom of the heel and slacks adds depth



Use effects to show the strong impact of the high kick

A pose full of composure as a hand reaches out to control a dark power

A pose showing kicking its target up from below

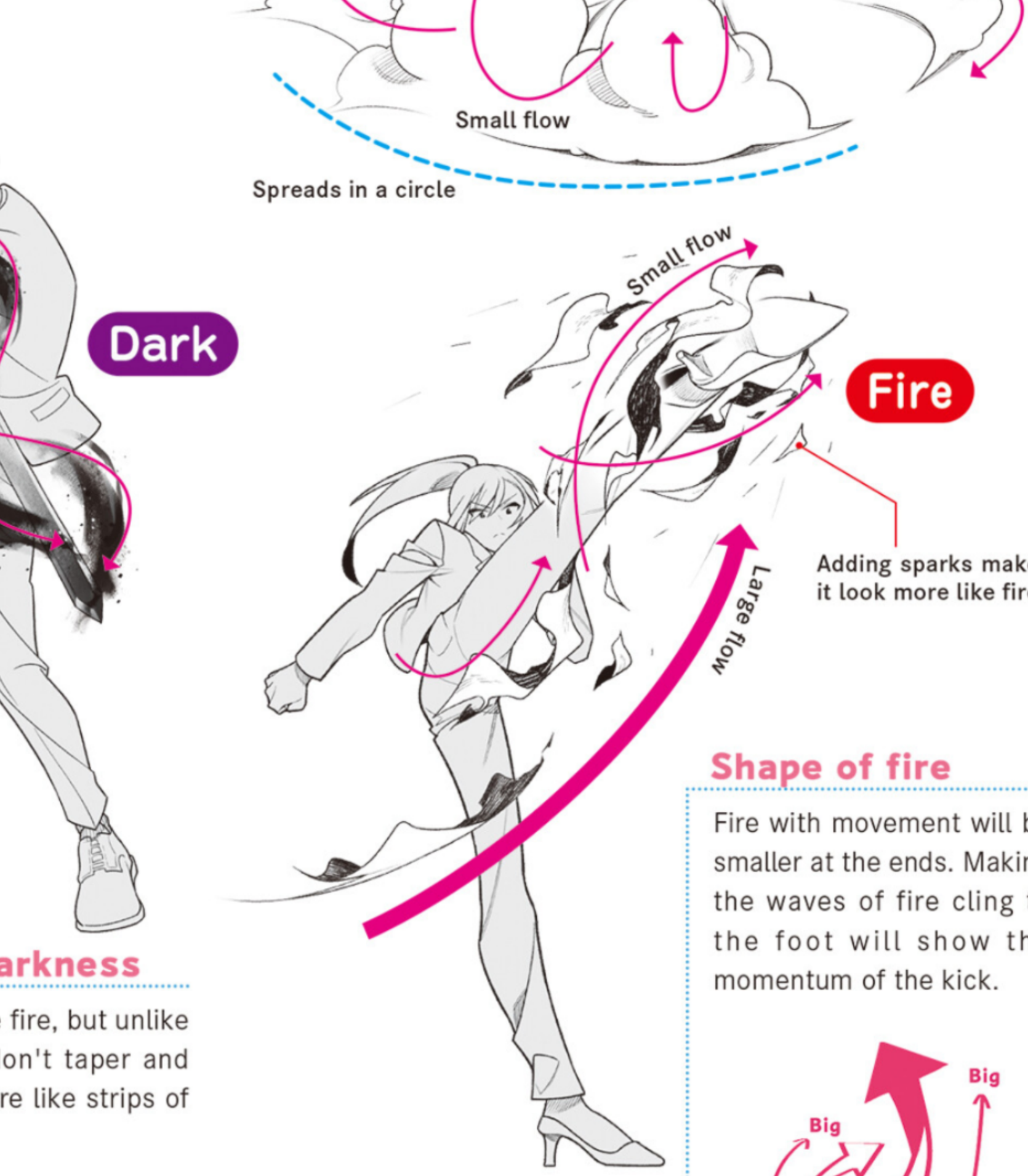


Using only straight lines would make the drawing look masculine, so the arms go in for a more feminine feel

Note the line from the groin to the neck

Various Effects

You can add flair to a pose with effects. Here are previous poses with effects added.



Shape of smoke

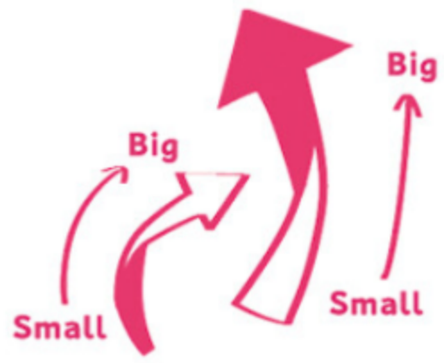
It curls up as it gets farther from where the sword hits the ground.

Shape of darkness

It has waves like fire, but unlike fire, the ends don't taper and instead look more like strips of cloth.

Shape of fire

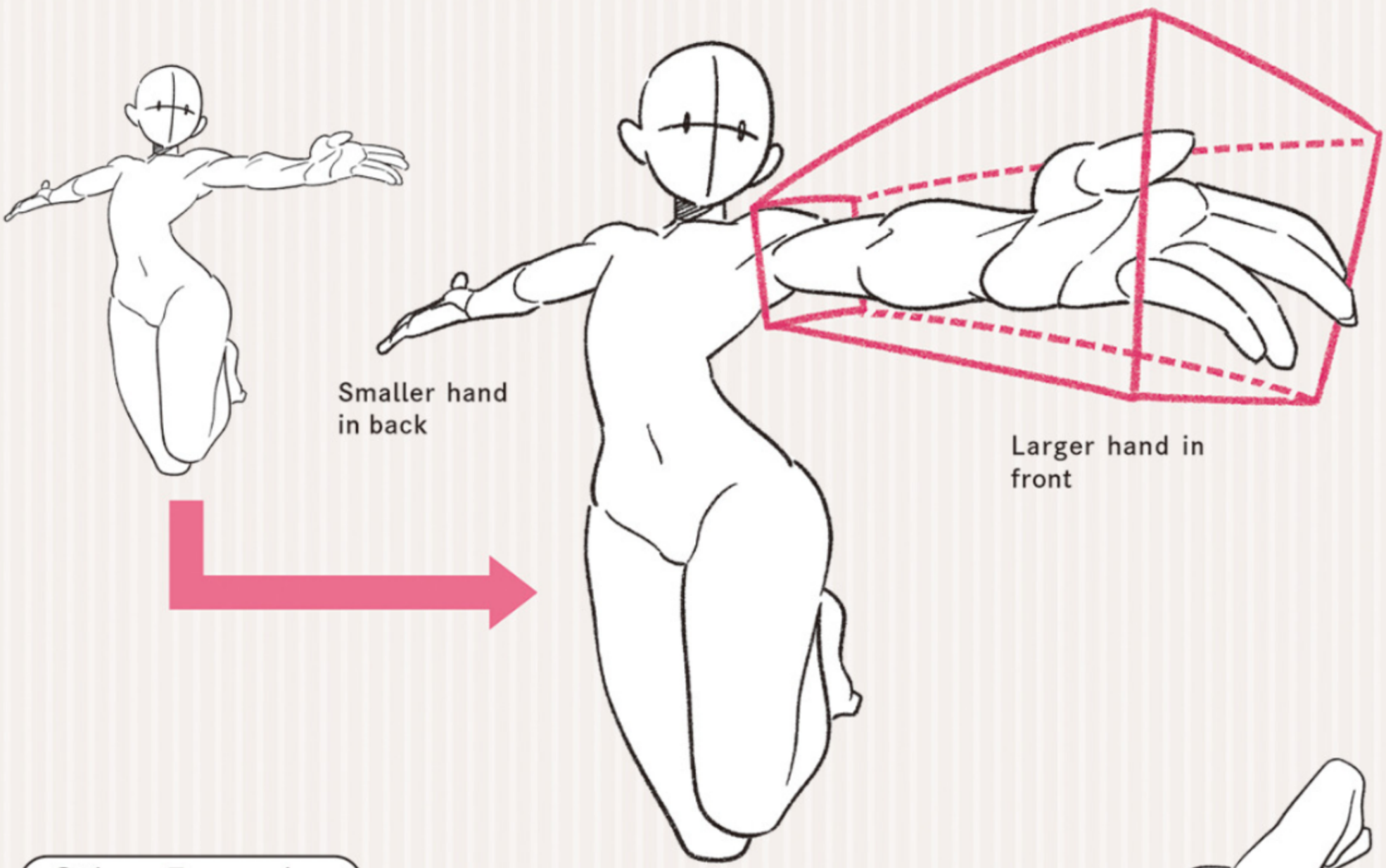
Fire with movement will be smaller at the ends. Making the waves of fire cling to the foot will show the momentum of the kick.



Column

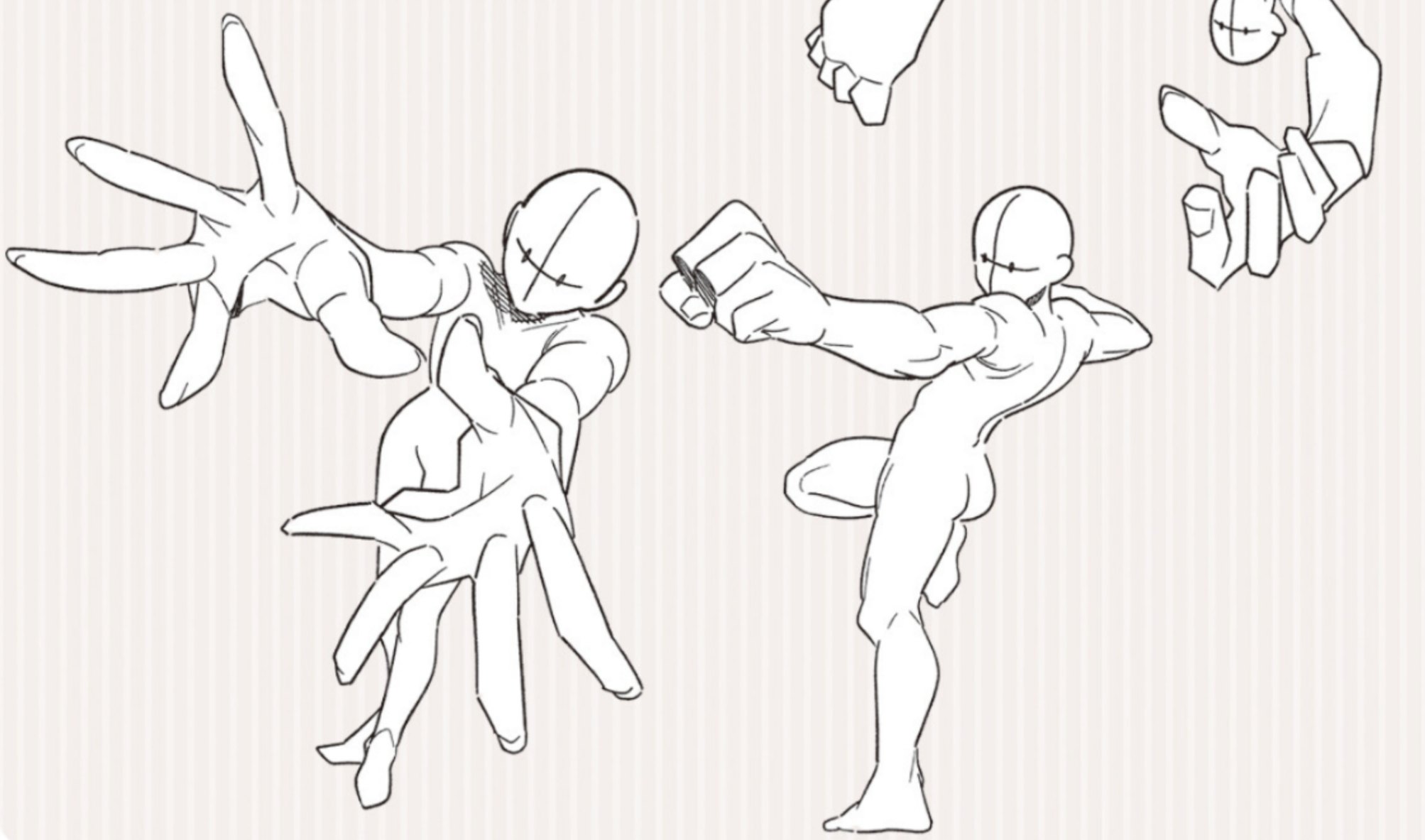
Draw Large Parts to Show Depth

Draw parts in the foreground larger for a more powerful pose. Drawing parts in the background smaller creates contrast for a powerful picture. The contrast isn't that large in reality, so this is unique to drawing. This kind of drawing is sometimes referred to as exaggerated perspective.



Other Examples

Note how the parts in the foreground are larger than the parts in the background



Chapter

3

Dramatic Poses

A collection of standalone poses and poses that show everyday scenes. There are bust poses as well as full-body poses for you to use.

Chapter 3 13

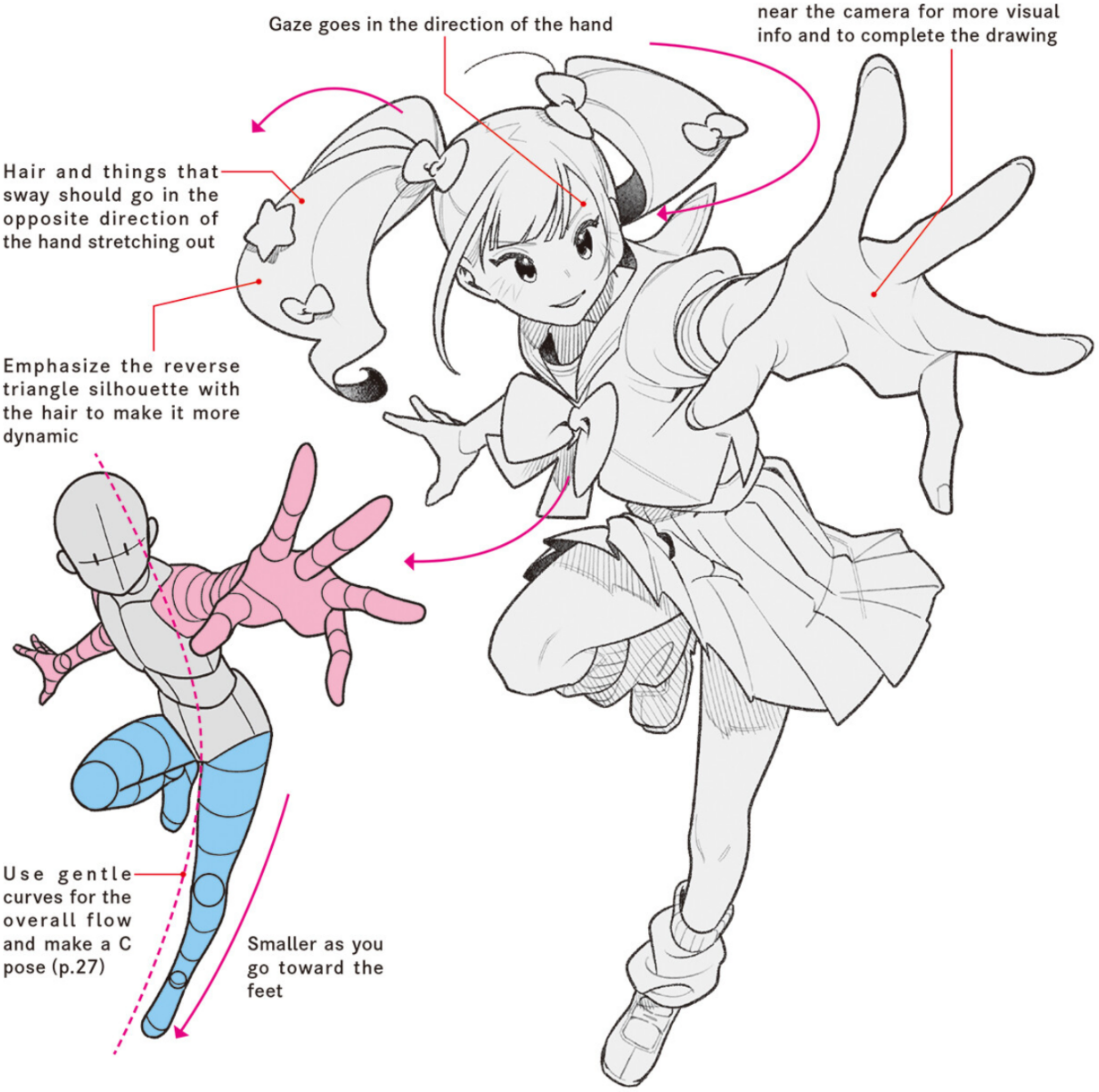
Dramatic Poses

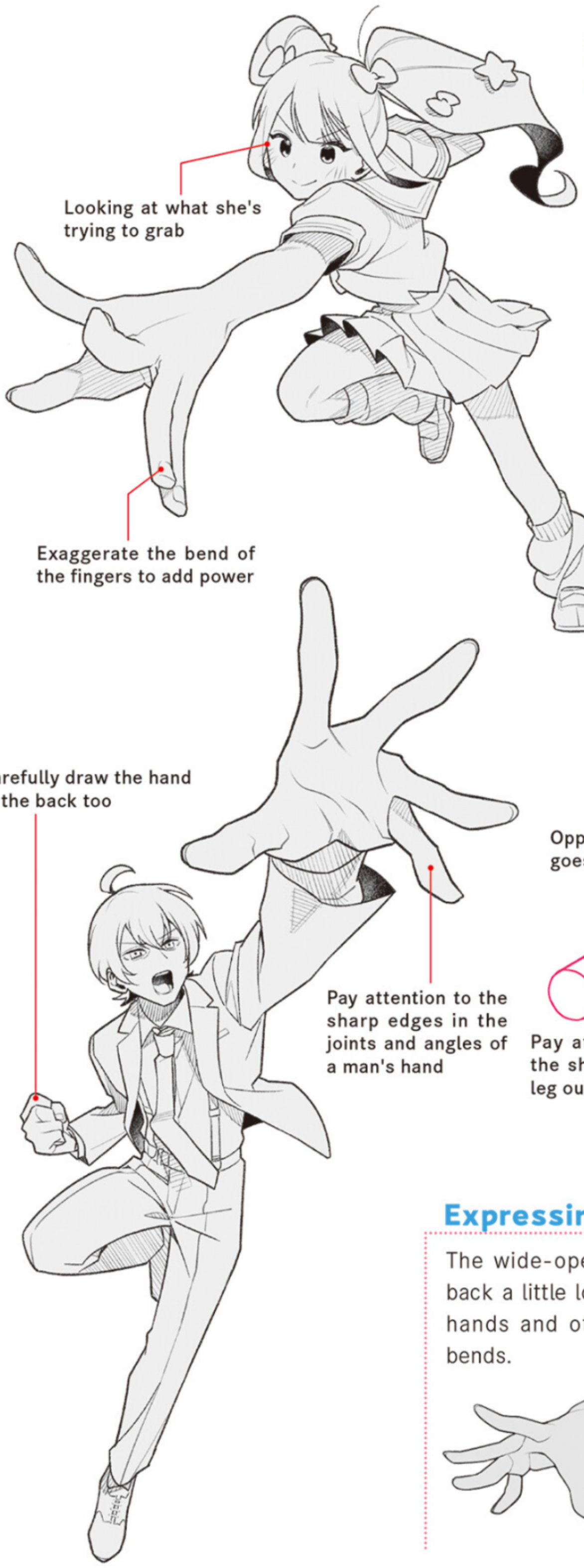
Grab

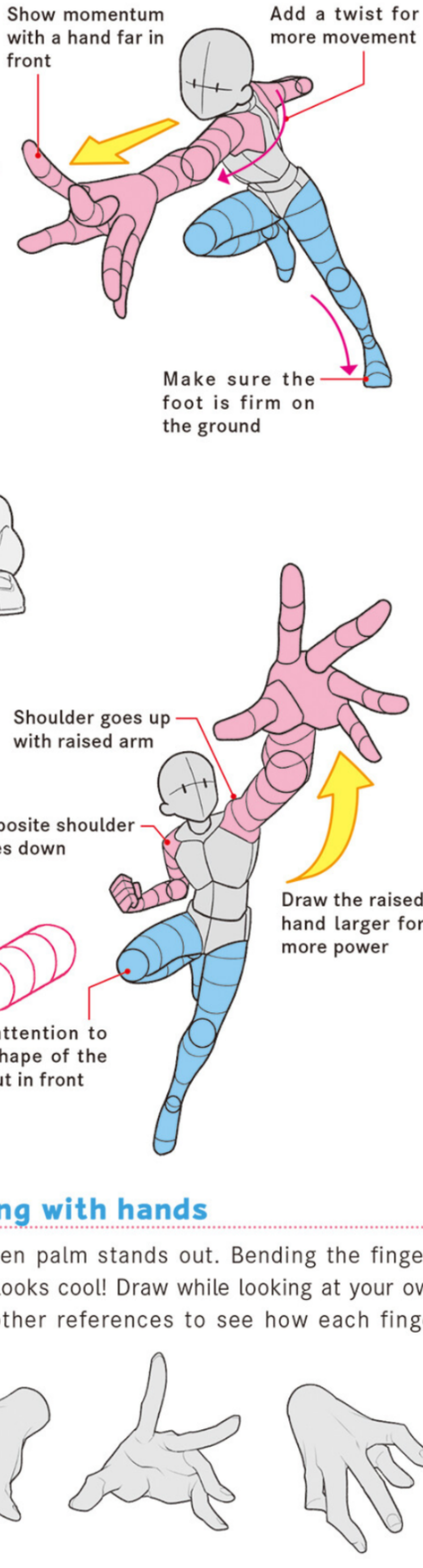
This pose has the hand reaching out to the foreground to grab something and looks good on its own. Since the hand is close to the camera, it should be drawn larger to show force and momentum. Make it look like the lower body is stepping out to highlight that.

Go All Out With Perspective

Draw the hand closer to the camera larger and the one farther away smaller to show the distance between the foreground and background. This makes a more powerful and energetic pose. Check p.124 for more info on exaggerated perspectives.

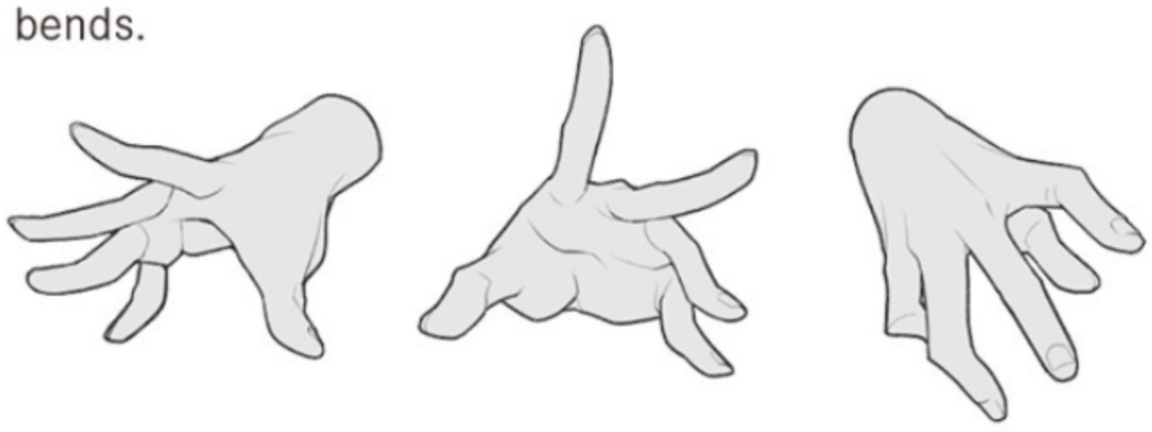






Expressing with hands

The wide-open palm stands out. Bending the fingers back a little looks cool! Draw while looking at your own hands and other references to see how each finger bends.



Chapter 3

14

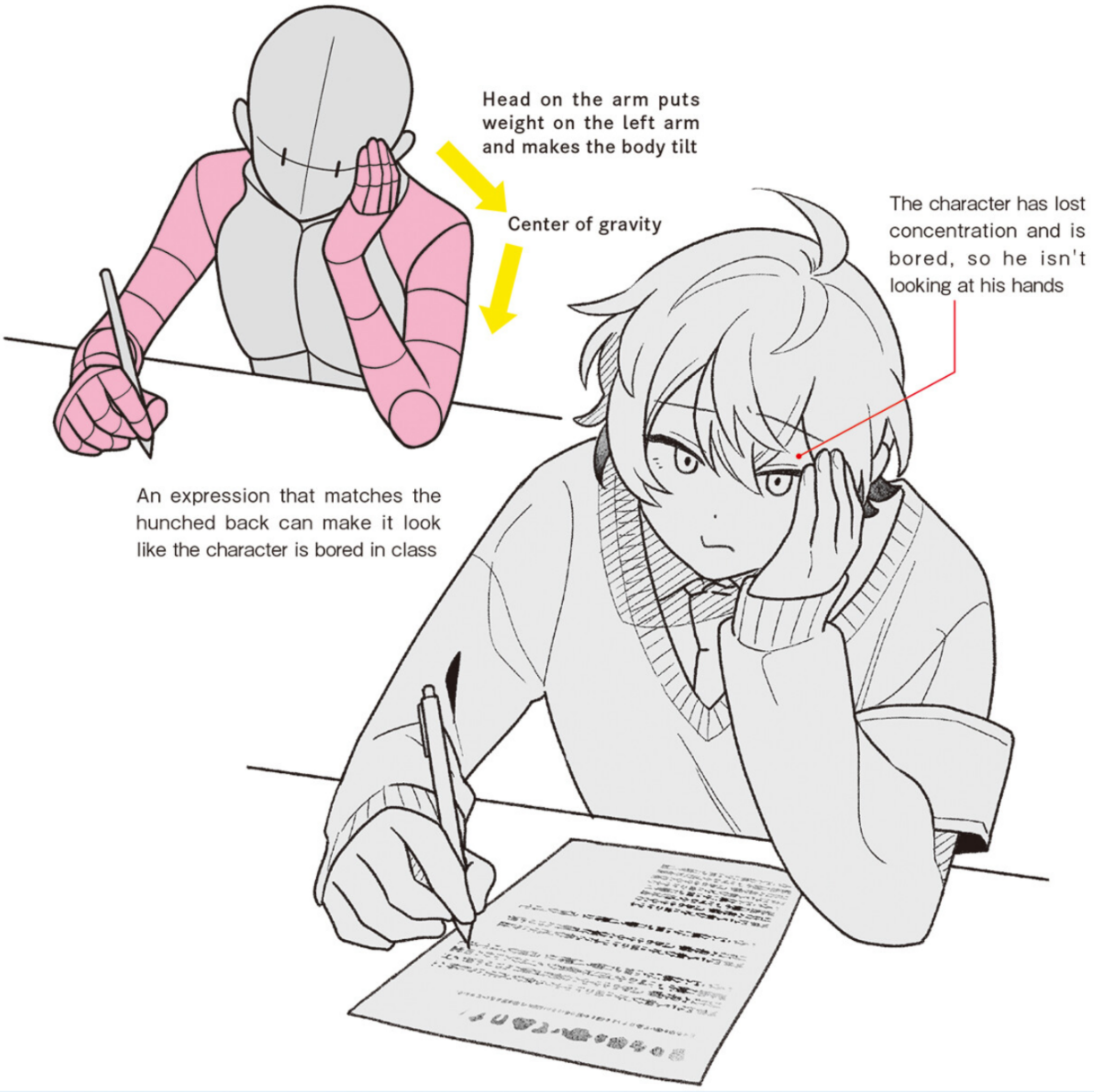
Dramatic Poses

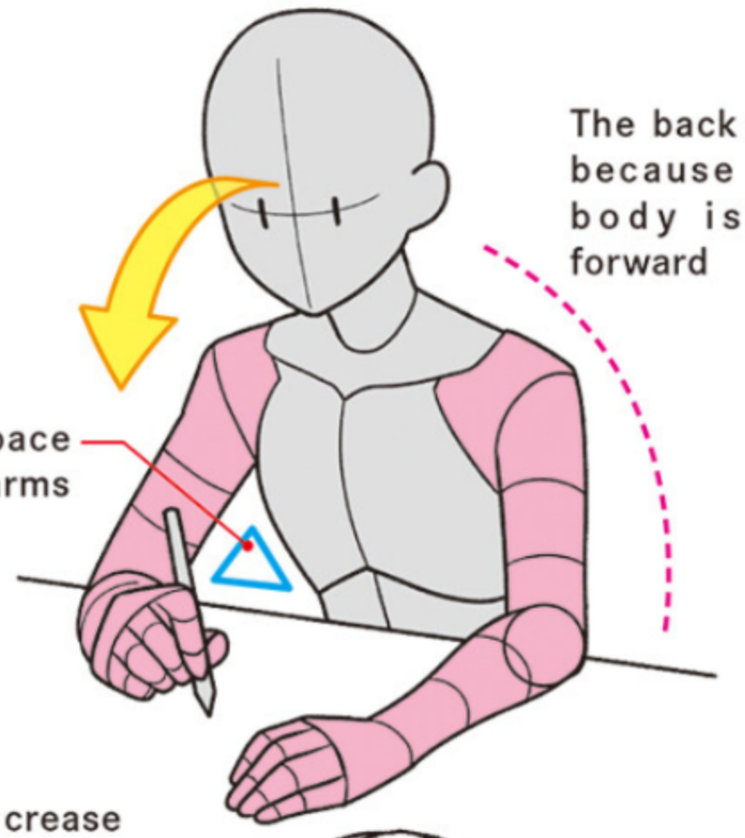
Write

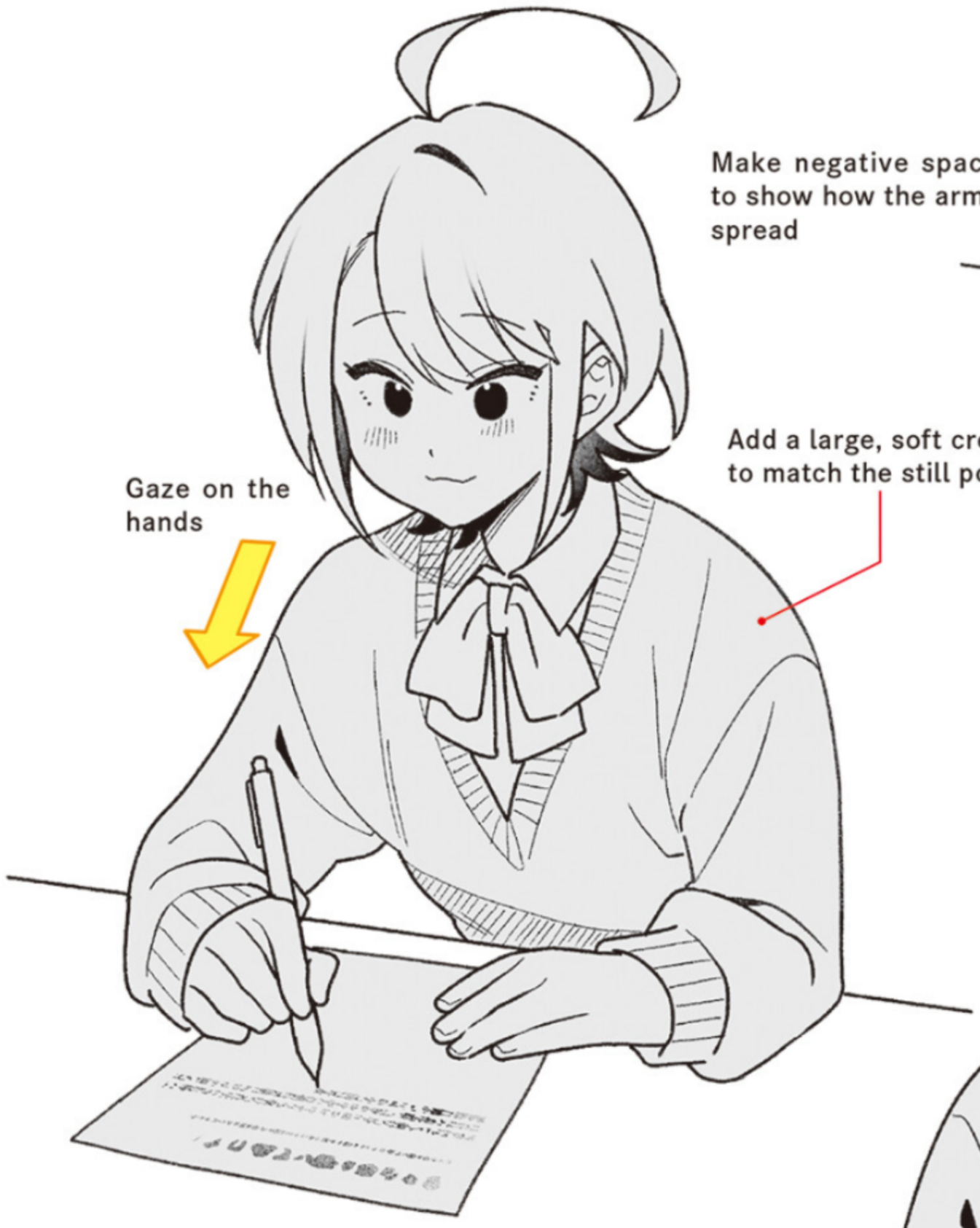
This pose can be used when writing or drawing something at a desk, like if your character is in a classroom or just writing a letter. How they sit can express their personality. Note where the arm and elbow touch the table as well as the angle of the upper body.

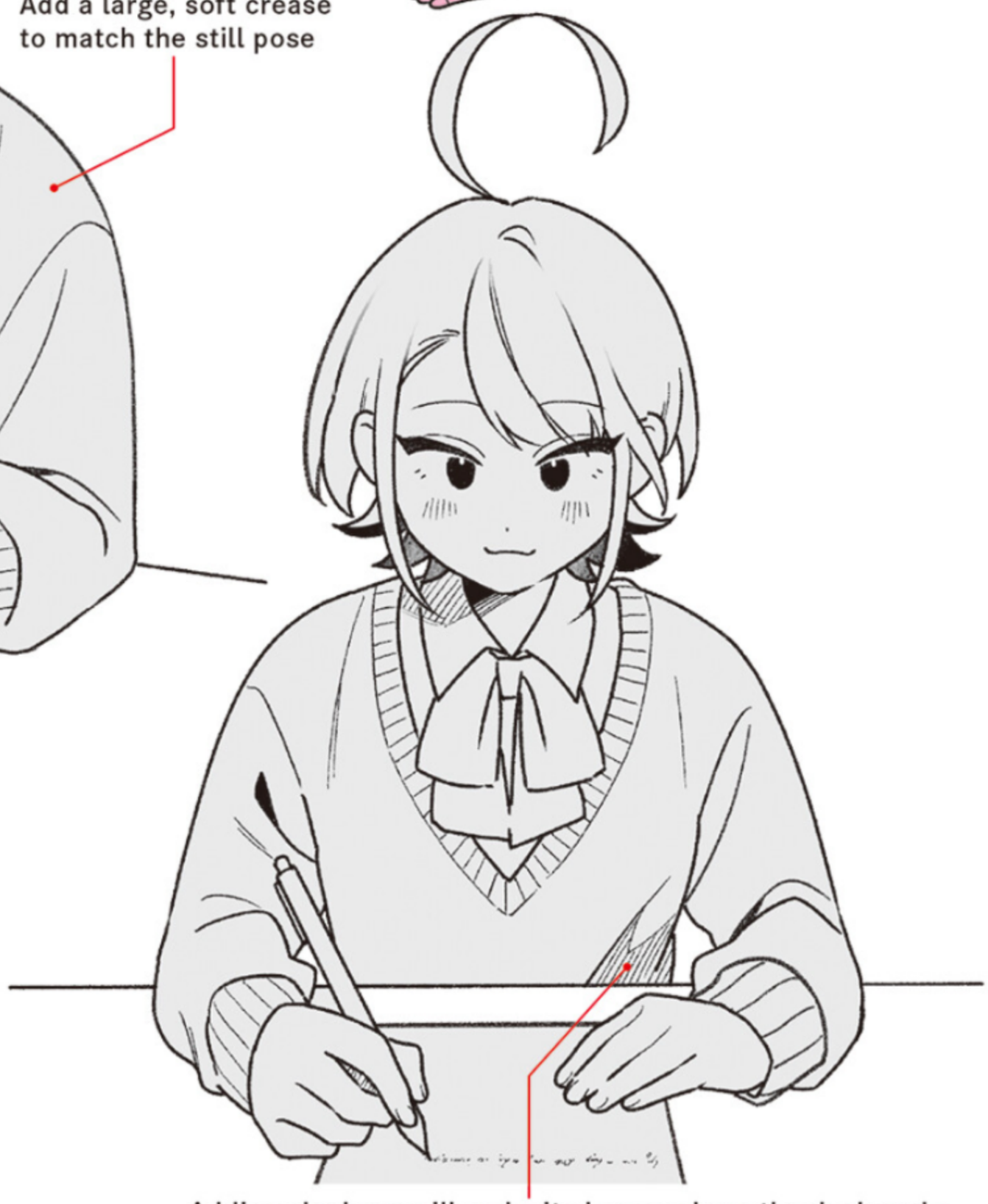
Look at the Eyes

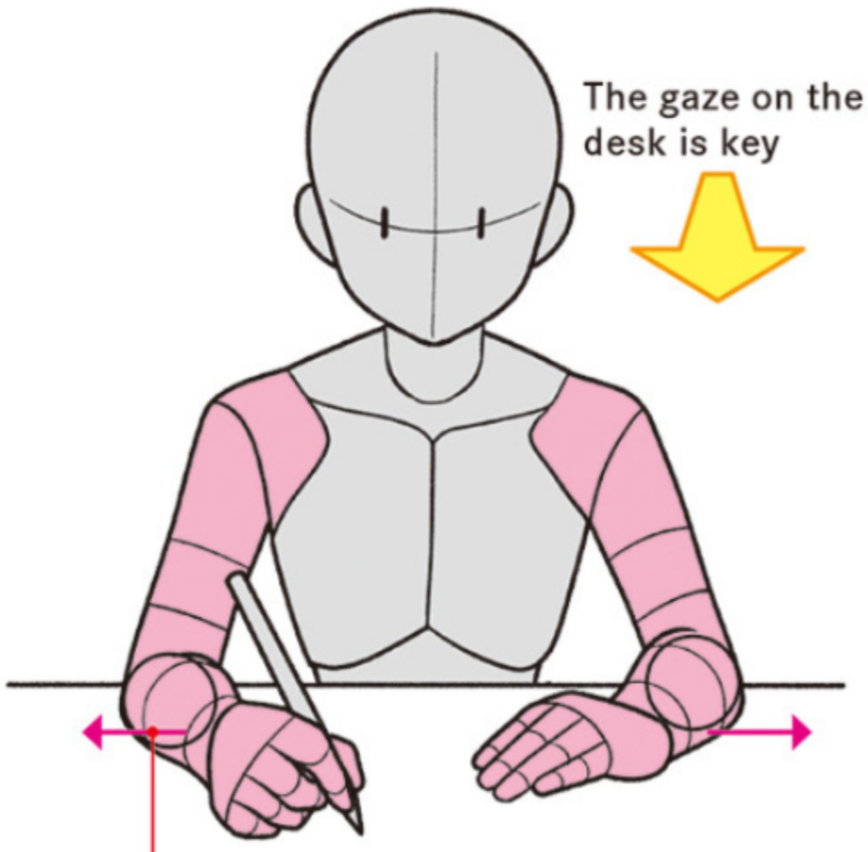
Your eyes always follow the pen when you write something. If the gaze is elsewhere, it won't look like the character is writing. The character will look like they're daydreaming or have stopped writing. Make sure to put the character's gaze on the tip of the pen.











Expressing with hands

The grip of the thumb and index finger on the pen can be drawn stronger or weaker. The position of the fingers is complex, so look at an example while drawing.

Chapter 3

15

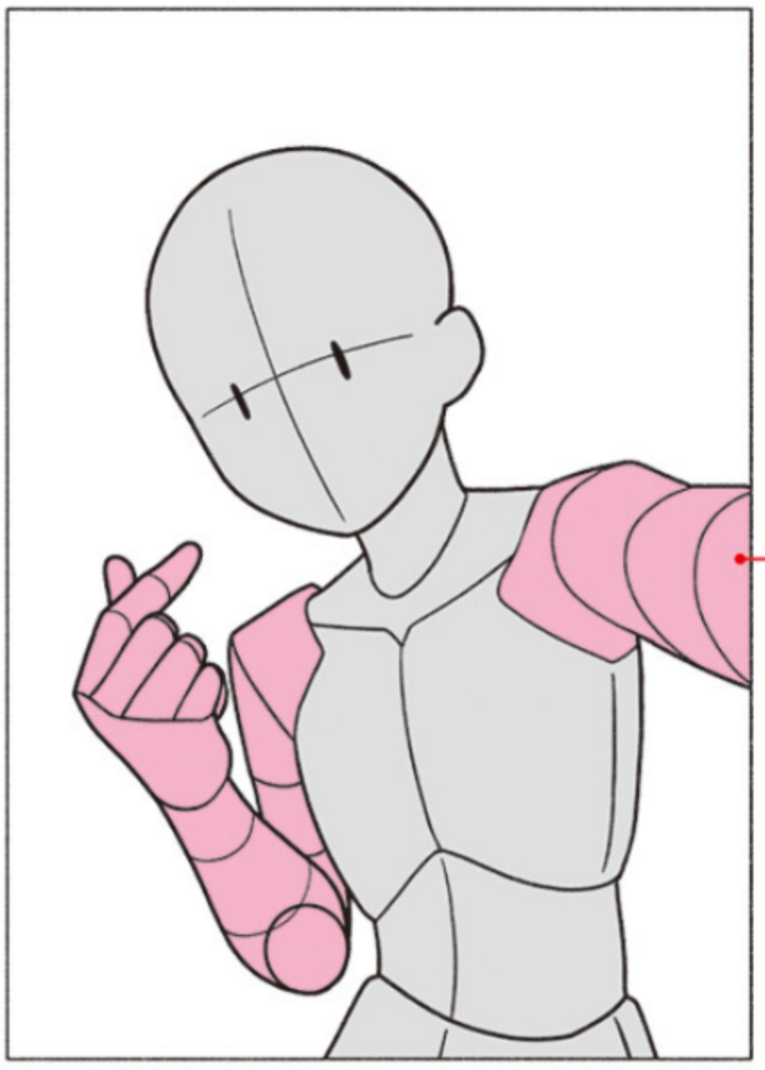
Dramatic Poses

Selfie

A pose where the character holds out a camera to take their own picture. It's a good way to show off the charm of a cute character and is a popular pose. When drawing selfie poses, pay attention to the frame and have the hand with the smartphone outside of it.

Arm Perspective

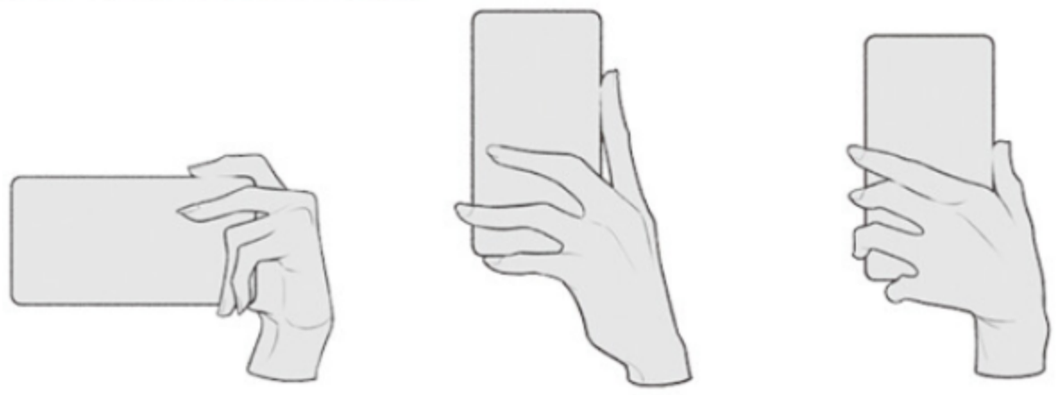
When using the smartphone's front camera, the hand holding the smartphone will be outside of the frame. If you're not careful with the perspective, it'll just look like the character has their arm out. Try taking a selfie with a smartphone to see how the hand goes out of the frame.

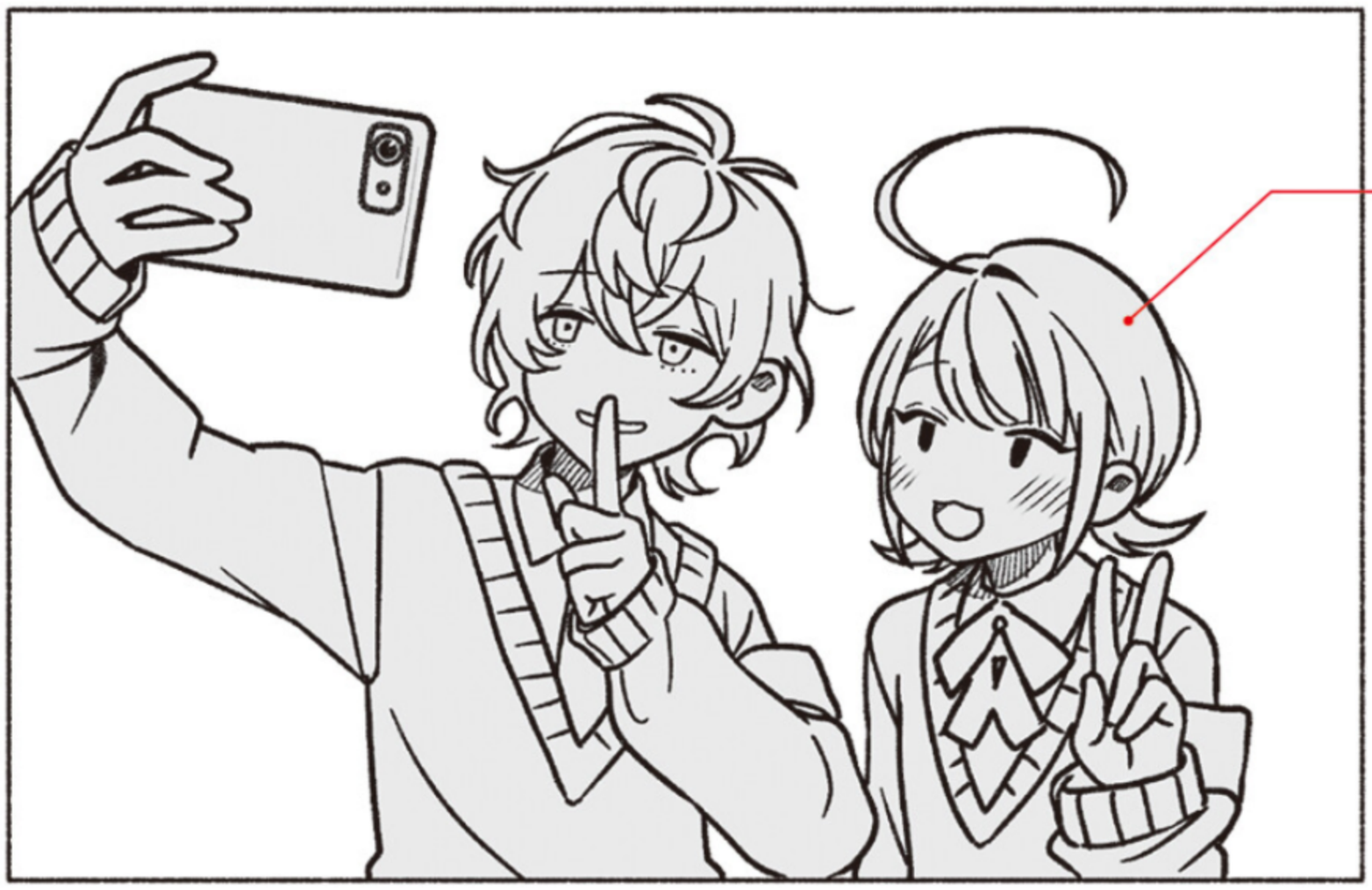


Make it feel like a selfie with the hand holding the camera

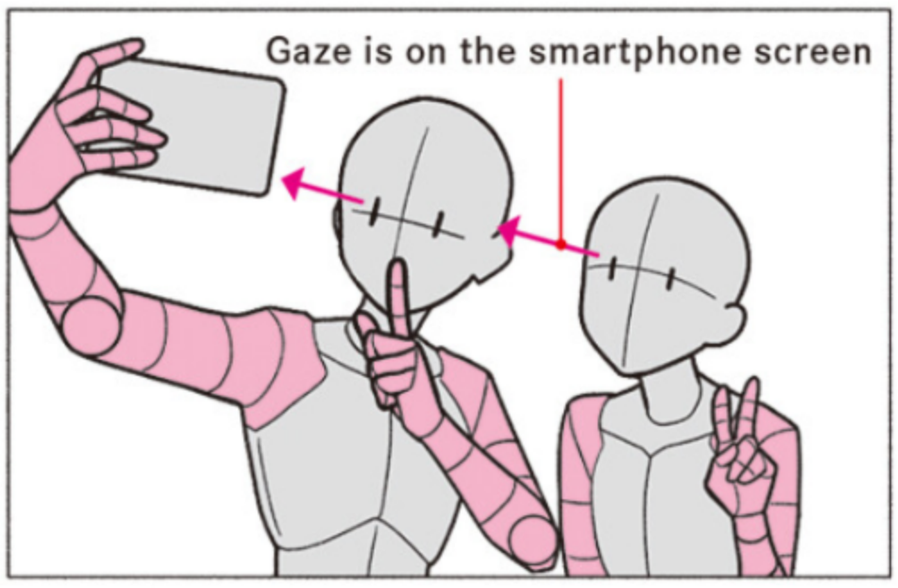
Expressing with hands

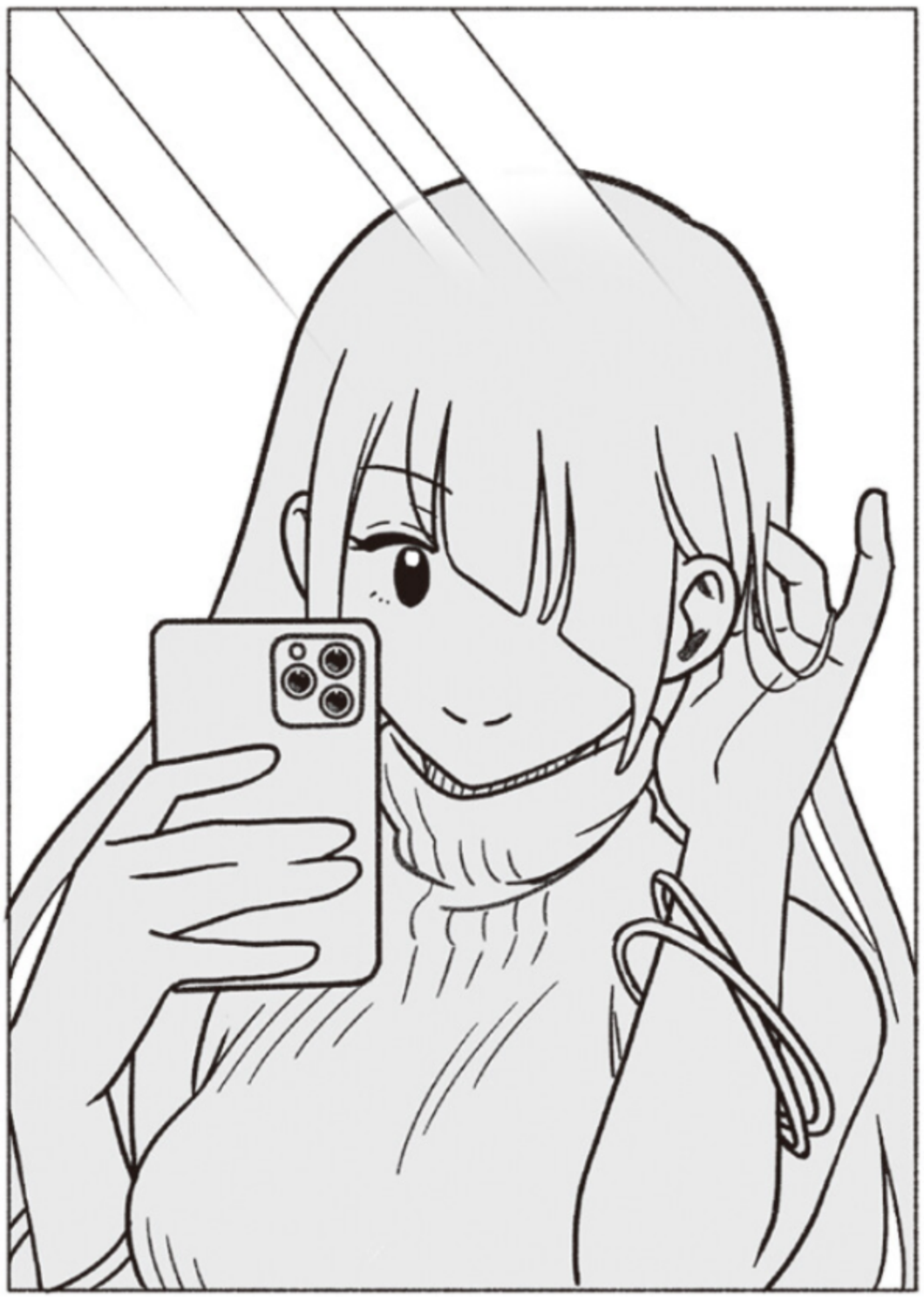
The way a character holds the camera for a selfie can show their personality. Note which fingers are used to hold up the phone to make the drawing more convincing! Be careful to make sure the smartphone and hand size match.





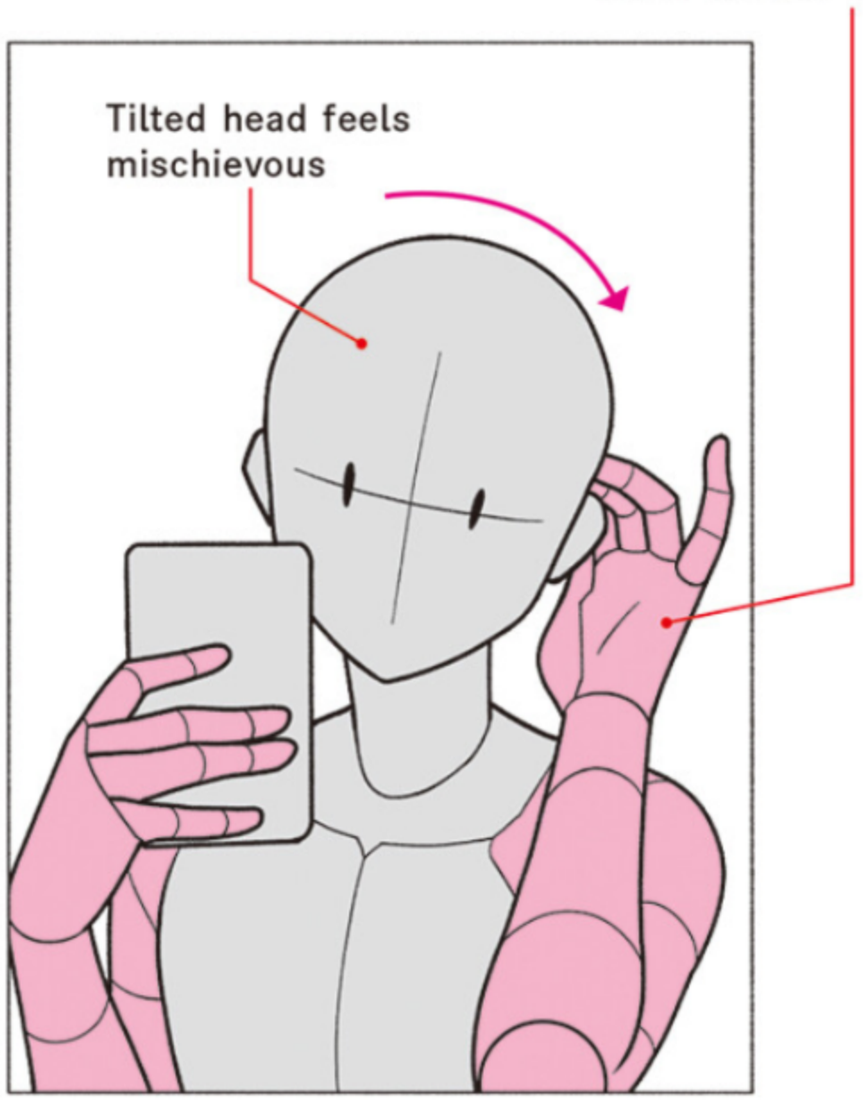
Characters in the photo are close together to fit in the frame, so pay attention to the distance





She's mirrored since she's using a mirror to take the photo.

Posing during a selfie makes the character seem used to selfies



Chapter 3

16

Dramatic Poses

Eat

There are various manners to eating. You can eat politely, fill your cheeks with food, and munch down. Learn how to draw different ways to eat to match characters' personalities.

Expression While Eating

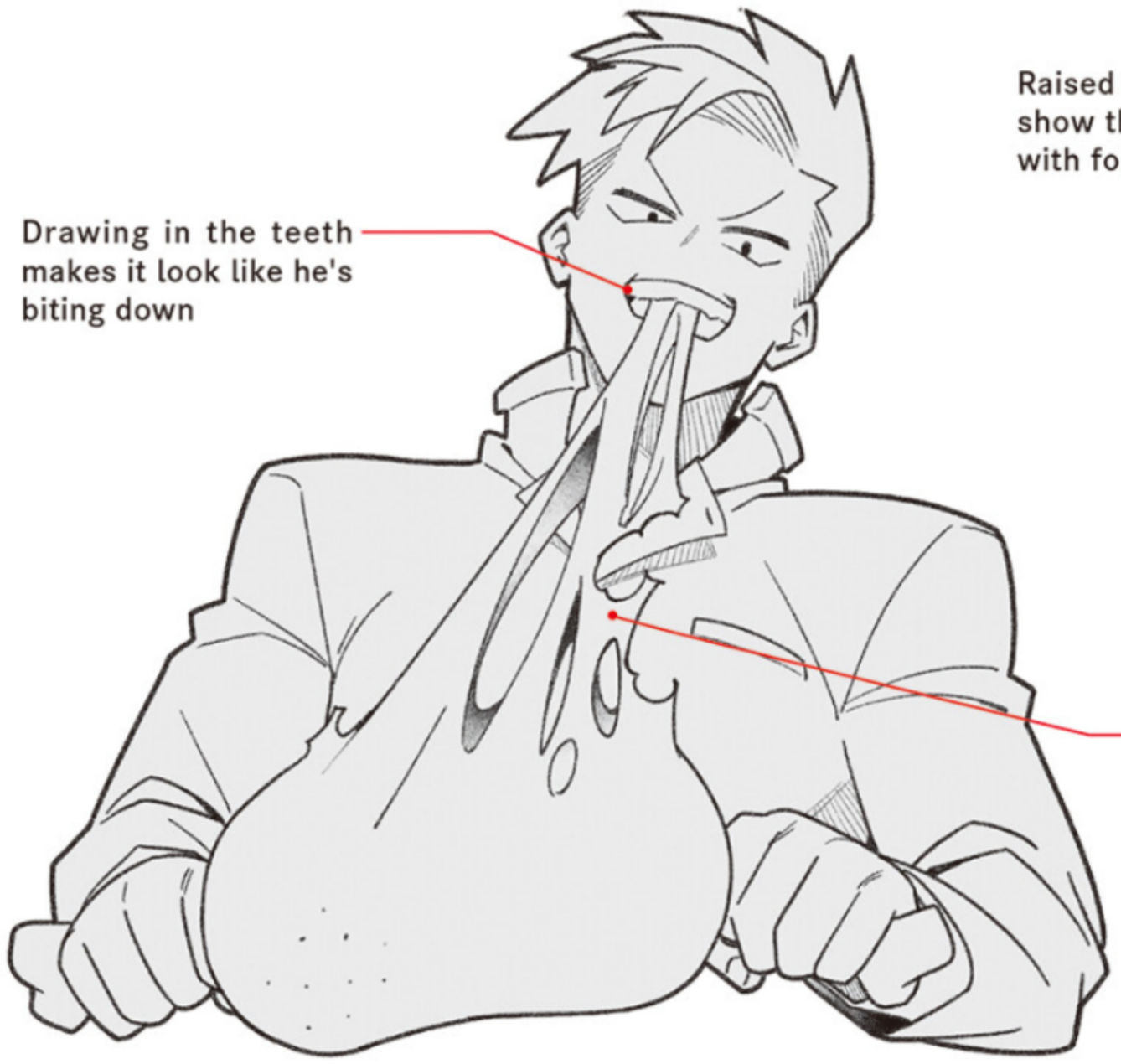
Yummy? Bad? Spicy? Sweet? Show what the character is feeling through their expression. When eating something yummy, it is shown through the face, but it can also be shown by raising the shoulders a bit.

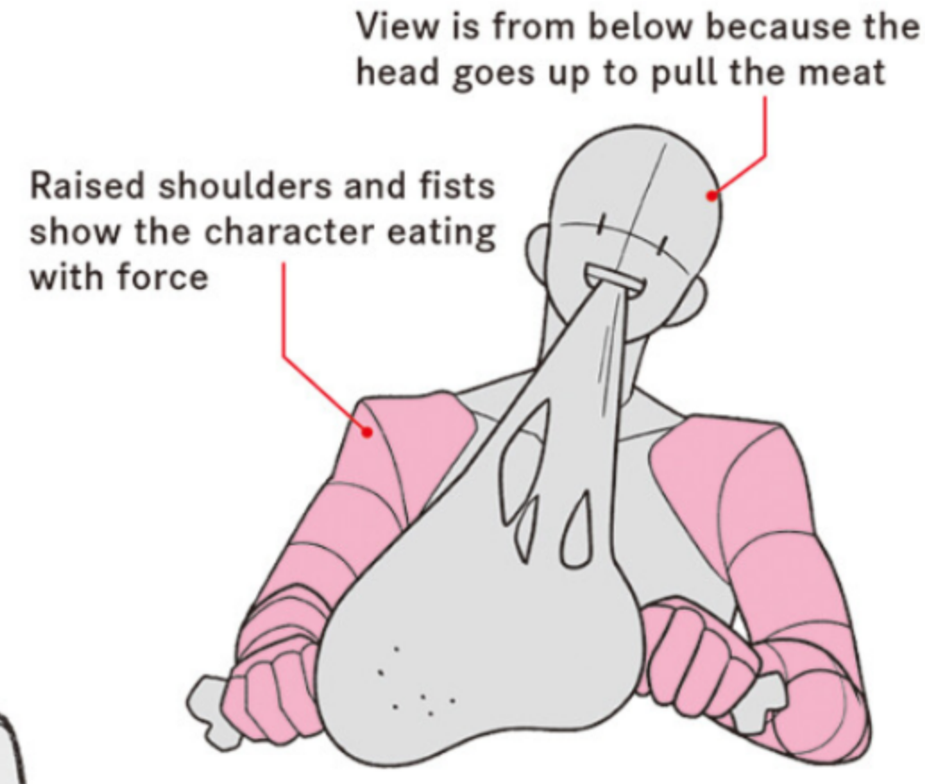
A smile combined with furrowed brows shows ecstasy, accentuated by bright eyes that make the food look even yummier

The head goes to the food, so the neck is bent

Elbows going outward makes it look like the character is really chowing down

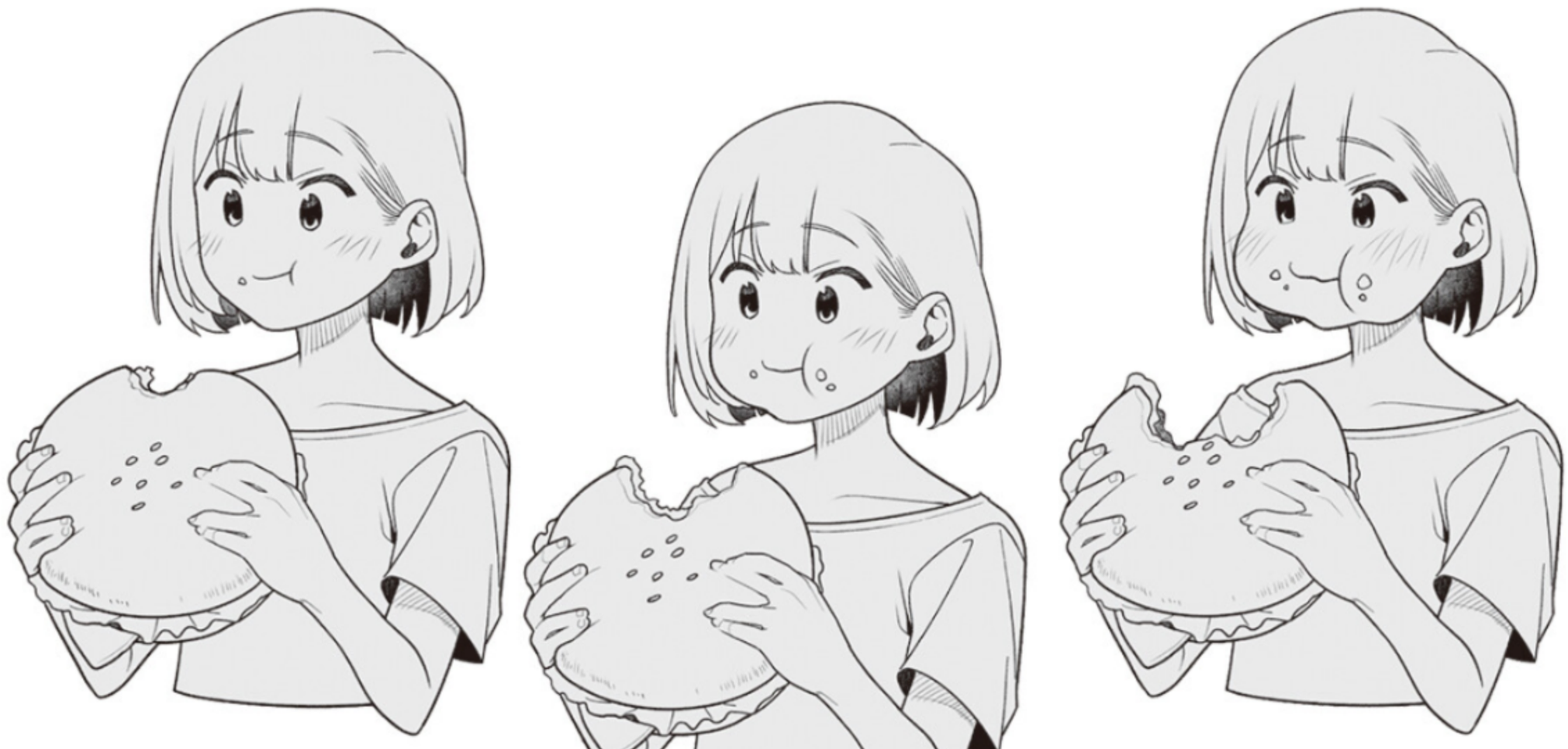
The hand holds the food with care, showing a love for food!





Food in the mouth

You often see drawings and comics where somebody has food in their mouth. The cheeks grow larger with more food. You can leave the line of the chin for a cartoonish feel while keeping the character's overall look!



Small mouth

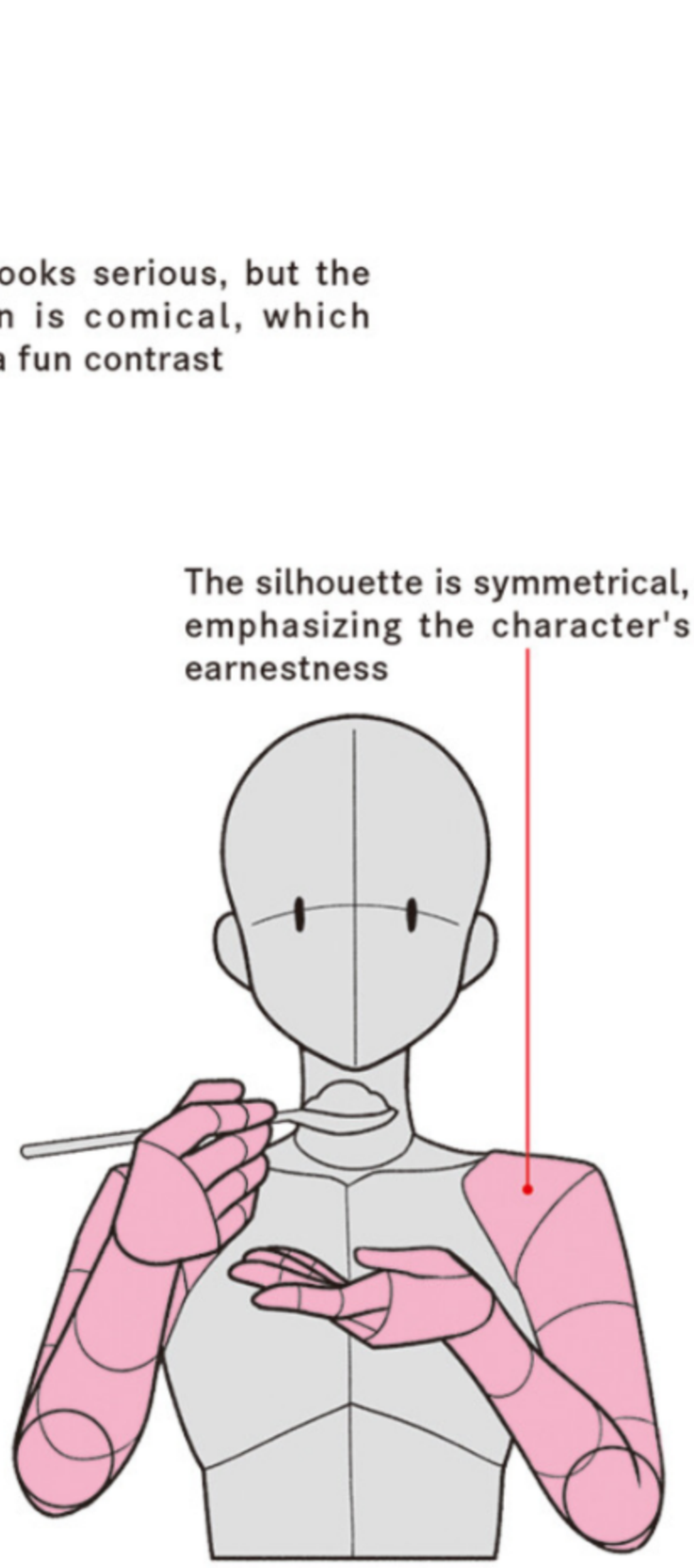
The cheeks don't enlarge much, so just add in a line at the edge of the mouth to show the cheek puffing up a bit!

Larger mouth

The cheeks are fuller here because the character has eaten quite a bit, and you can add food around the mouth to make it look like the bite was too big to fit

Huge mouth!

Puff out both cheeks like a cartoonish hamster, and raise the lower eyelids and make the eyes smaller to match!



Liked and disliked foods

You can change the impression of a pose just by changing the expression. Here is an example! The corners of the eyes and eyebrows drop to show pleasure when eating a liked food. The face tenses up and looks angry when eating a disliked food. To draw an angry expression, try making the mouth form a squished bone shape. Use the pose model for reference when drawing your own characters.

Like

Dislike

Column

Expression of the Hands

One way to explore a character is to add expression to their hands. A hand's expression can change how a pose feels, making it theatrical or controlling what a character wants to express.

Adding movement to the fingers can make them feel mischievous and dramatic

Not adding much expression to the fingers can make them feel normal and everyday

Chapter 3

17

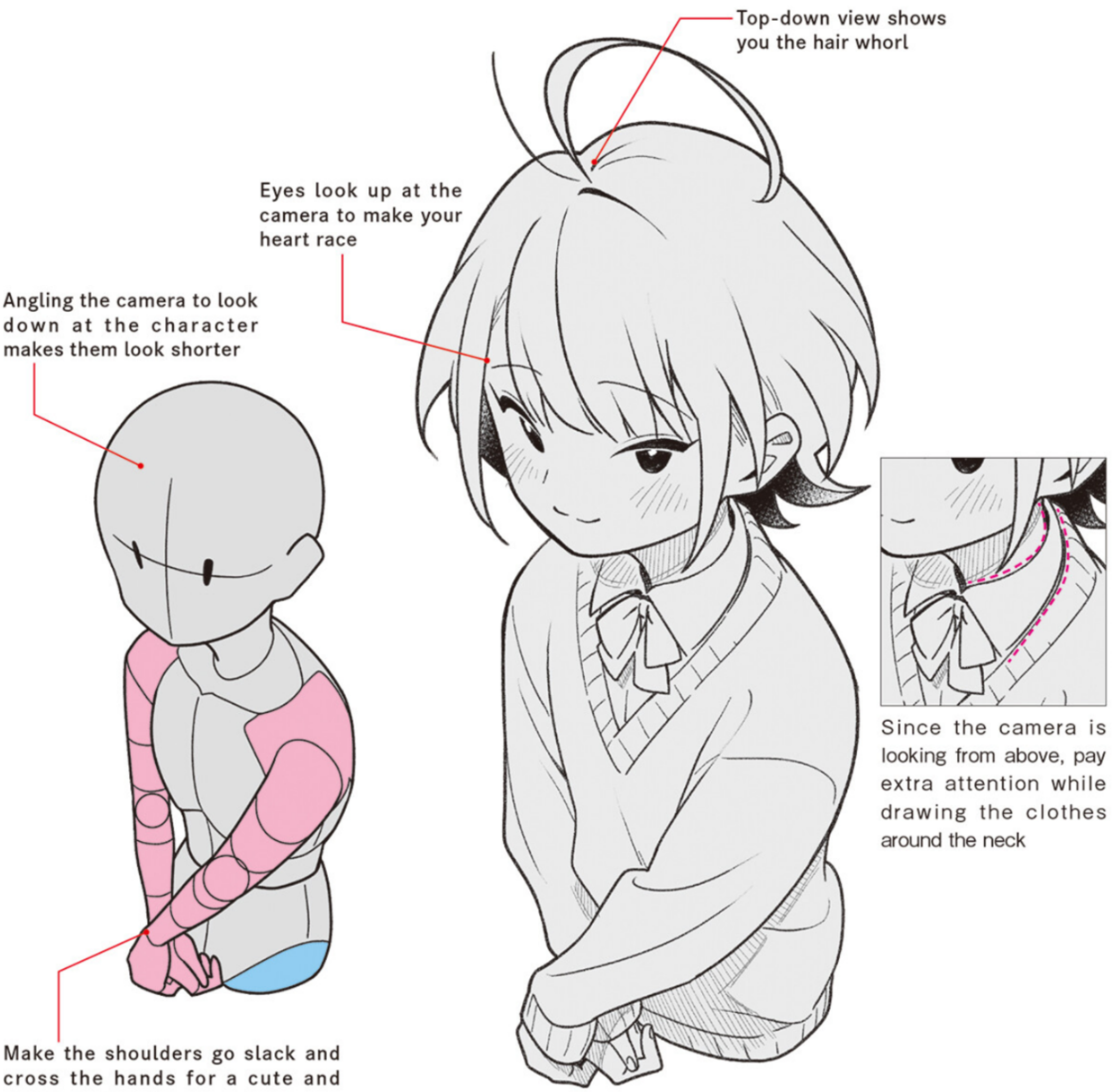
Dramatic Poses

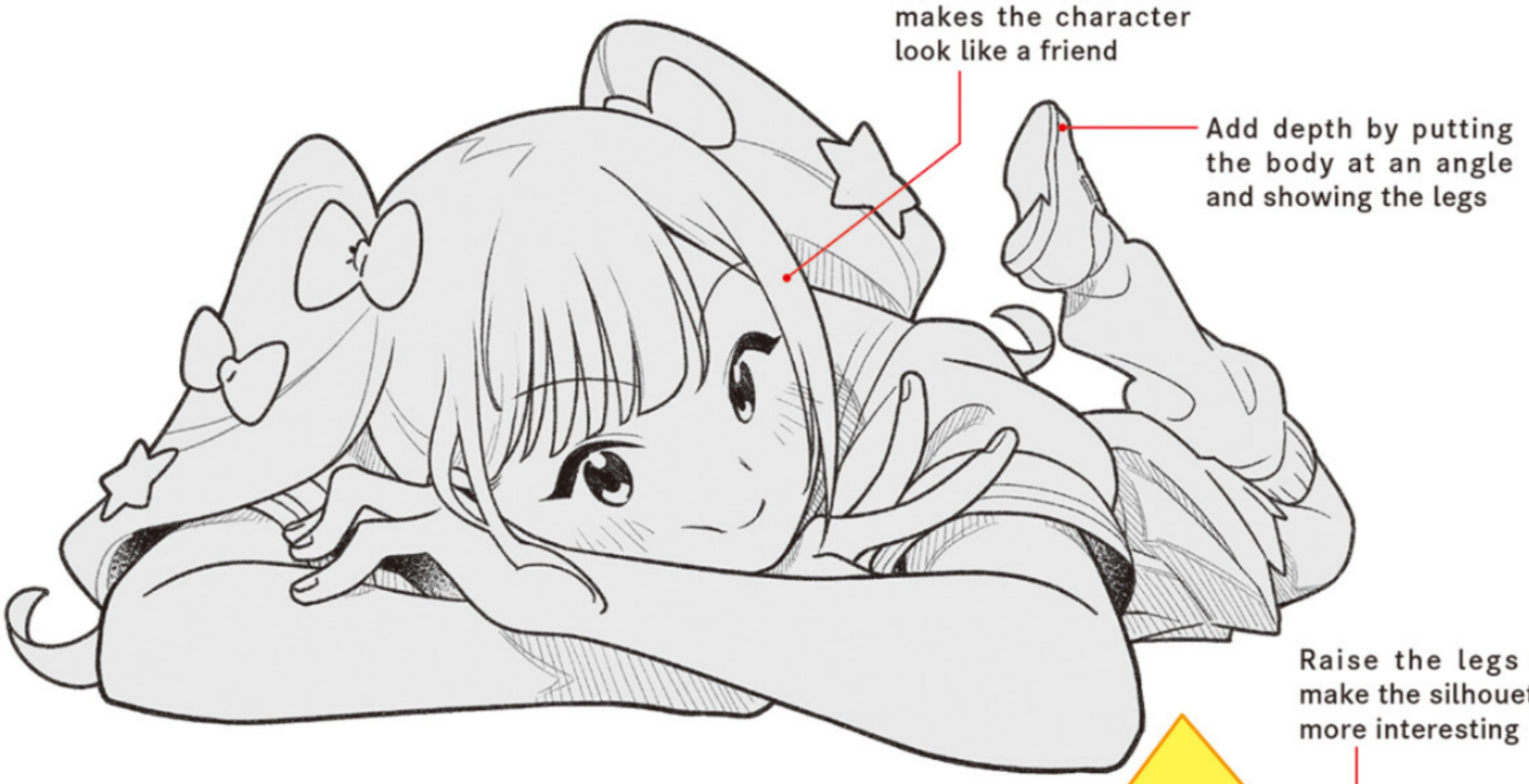
Gachikoi

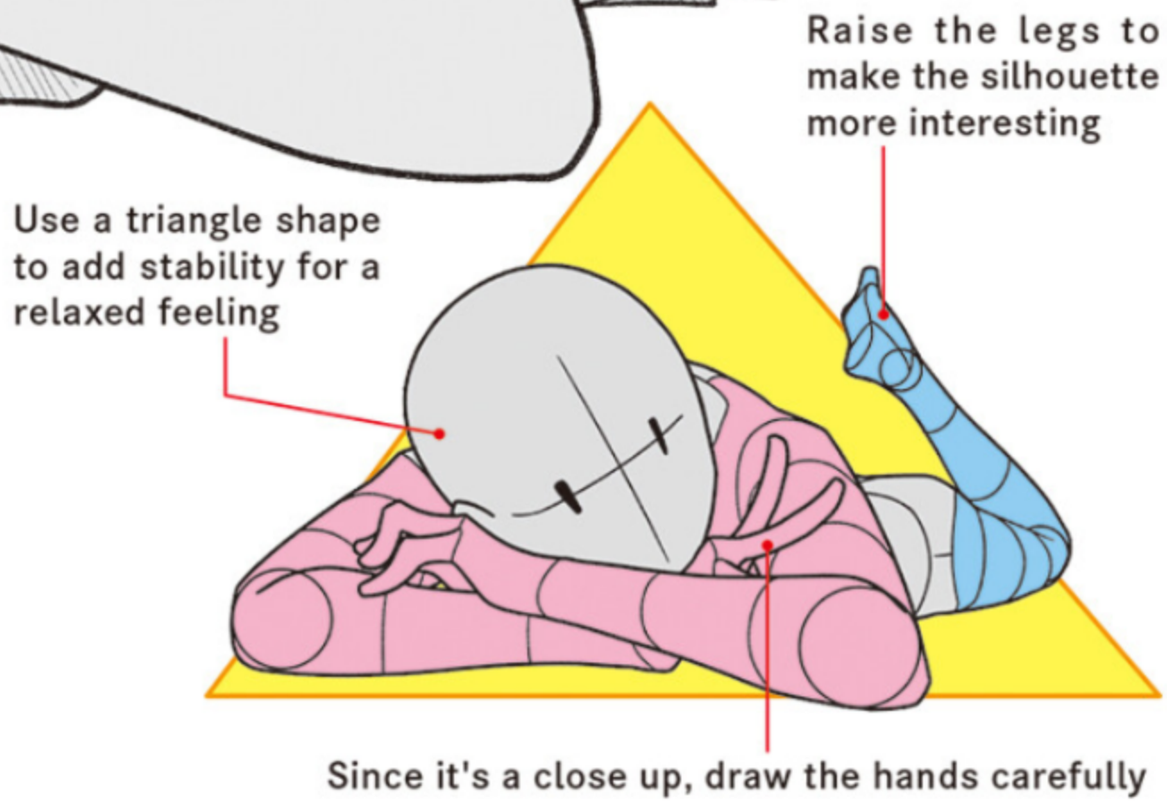
Gachikoi distance refers to when a face is so close that you feel like you might just fall in love. Here are some examples of the gachikoi distance, posing the face so it feels like it might come out of the screen with gestures that will make your heart race.

Distance to the Protagonist (Camera)

You can't just show gachikoi distance by zooming in on the character. Because the character is close to the camera, the perspective also changes. Make sure the parts far away from the camera are drawn at a different perspective.



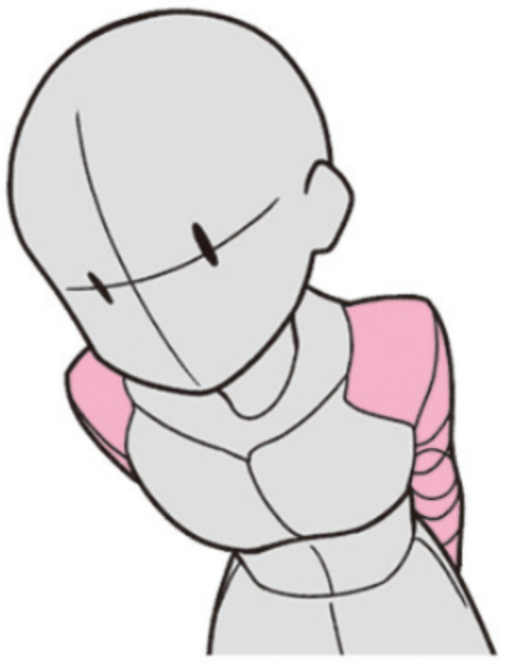




Distance to the camera

The closer to the camera you get, the larger the closer items become and the smaller the farther items become. When drawing at a gachikoi distance, exaggerate the size of the face. Don't forget to make parts in the back like arms and hips smaller!

Make the drawing more convincing by drawing close parts larger! This drawing also adds details to the eyes.



The angle of things closer up also becomes more extreme, so compare this image with the so-so image and you'll see that the face here is angled differently, and the upper body bends forward more to look up

△
SO-SO

It looks like the face is closer and lower, but there's still a sense of distance

Chapter 3 18

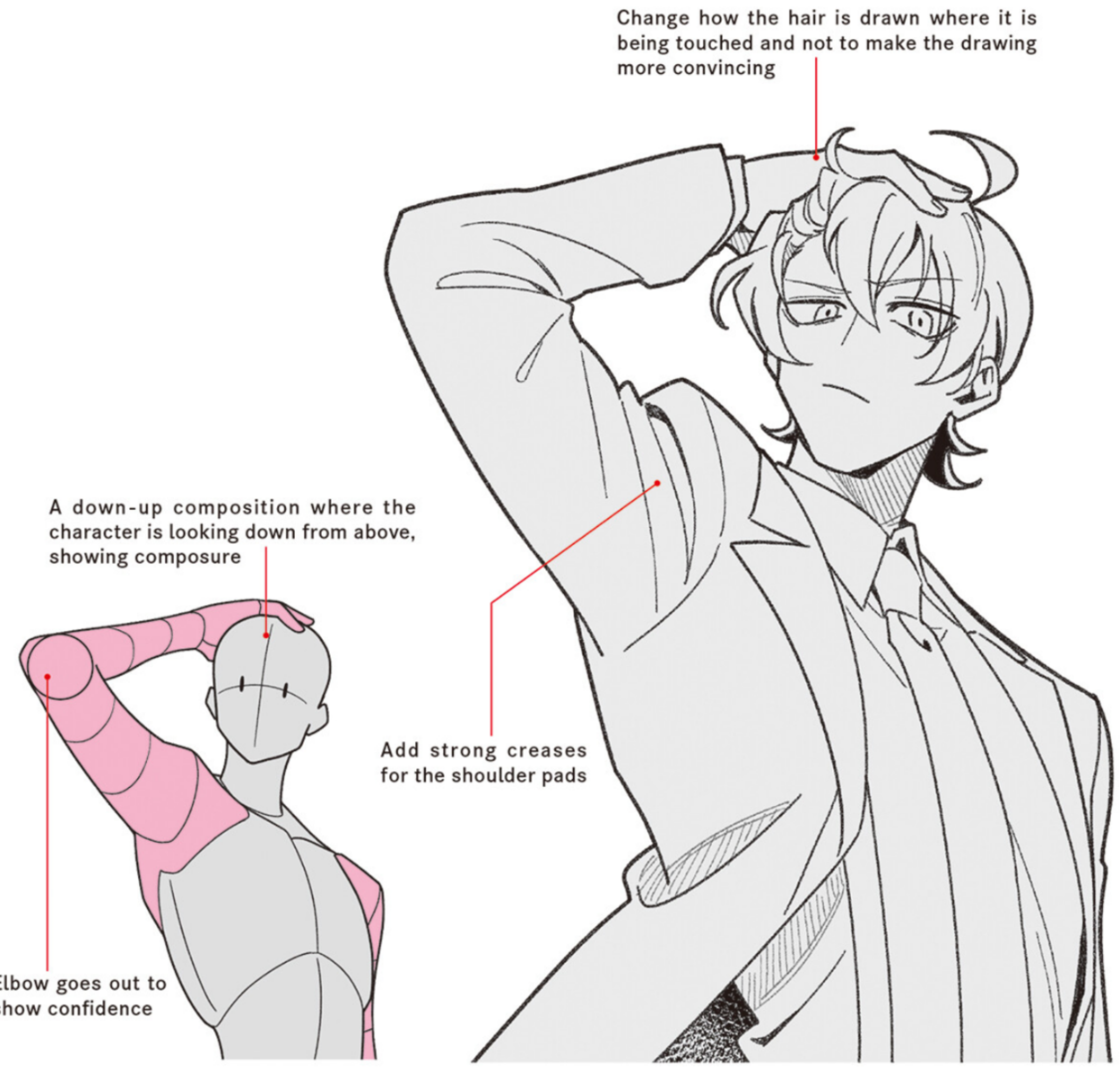
Dramatic Poses

Play With Hair

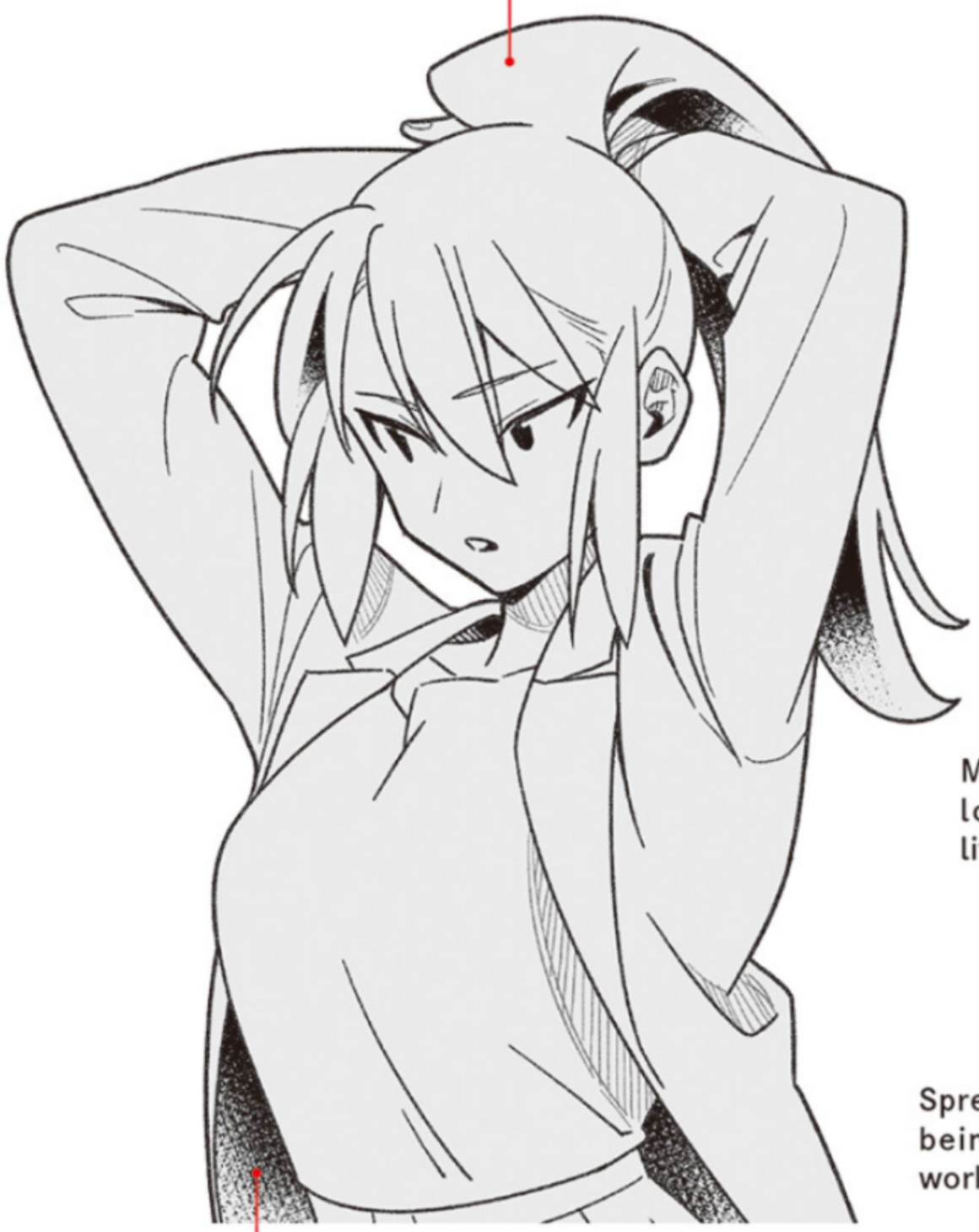
Tying hair, running hands through it, combing it behind an ear. Poses that play with hair have a certain sexiness to them. Hair has a specific movement when you brush through it, so pay extra attention to the references.

Hair and Expression as a Set

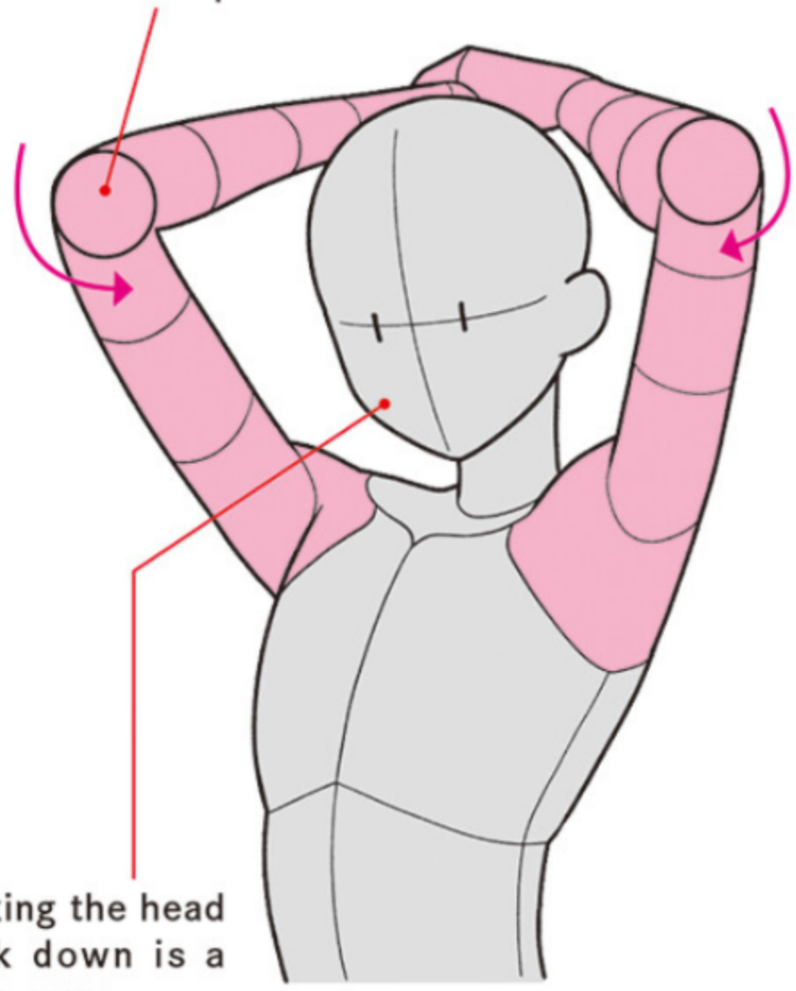
You need to think of sexy and cute gestures as a set with the facial expression. Blushes, downcast eyes, and condescending gazes are all examples of character expressions to pay attention to. Hands and arms are the stars of poses that play with hair, so draw them with care.



Draw the hair thickness carefully to make it look like it's tied!



Putting the elbows inward slightly instead of stretching them out horizontally makes a compact and feminine silhouette



Making the head look down is a little sexy

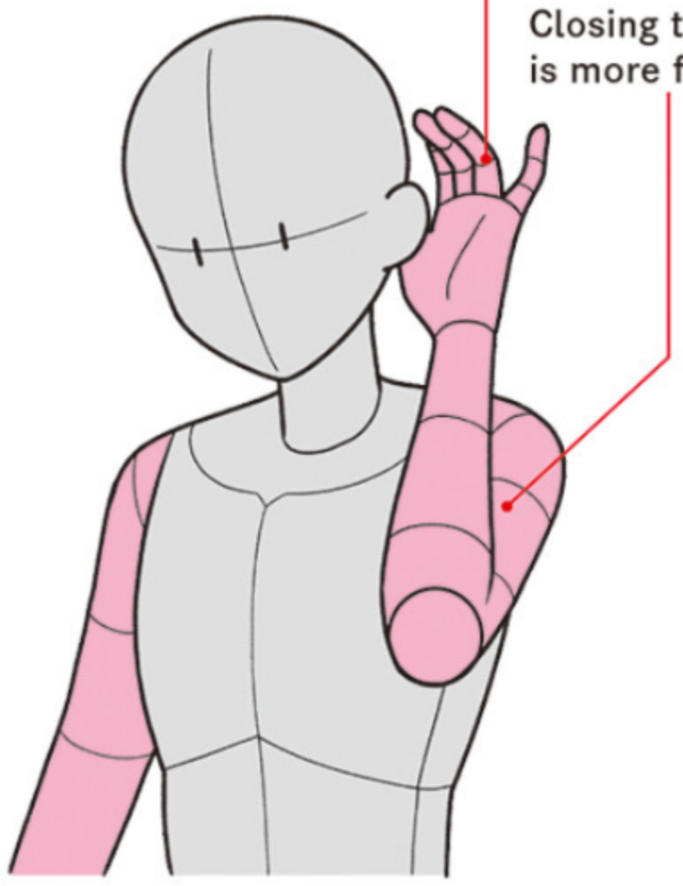
Spreading the hair like it's being blown by the wind works for a dramatic scene

Adding space between the jacket and body shows off the body line

The head is angled while the gaze is on the camera. It makes your heart skip a beat.

The palm of the hand goes behind the ear and brushes the bangs and hair on the side backward

Closing the armpit is more feminine



Chapter 3

19

Dramatic Poses

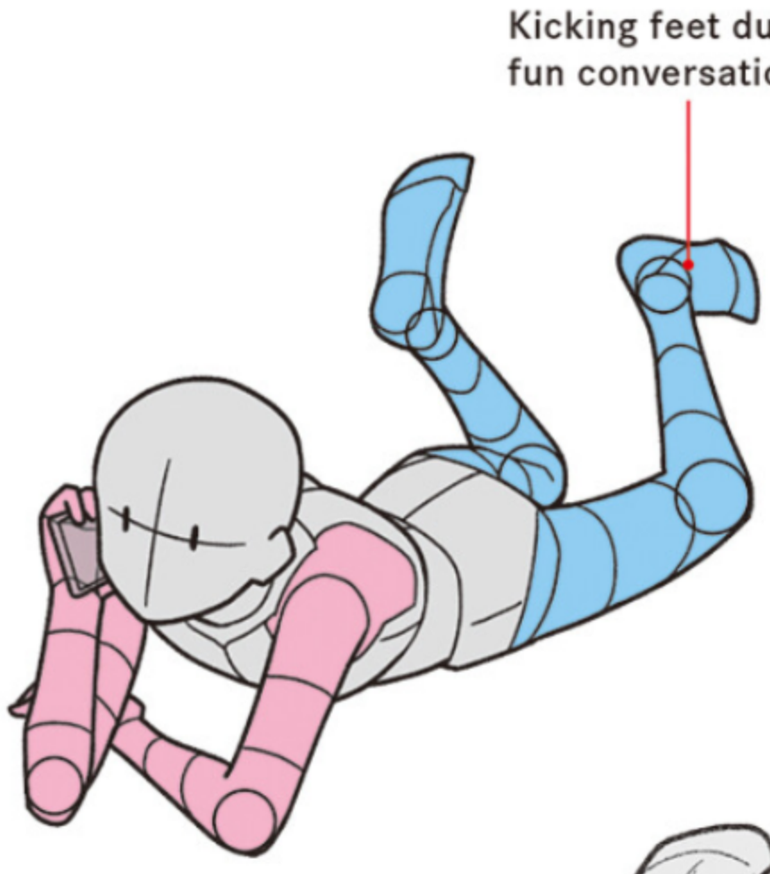
Phone

A pose where the character is holding a smartphone to their ear and talking to somebody. Note the position and angle of the ear and smartphone as well as how the smartphone is being held. You can also think about what poses you make while calling in different situations.

Pay Close Attention to the Expression

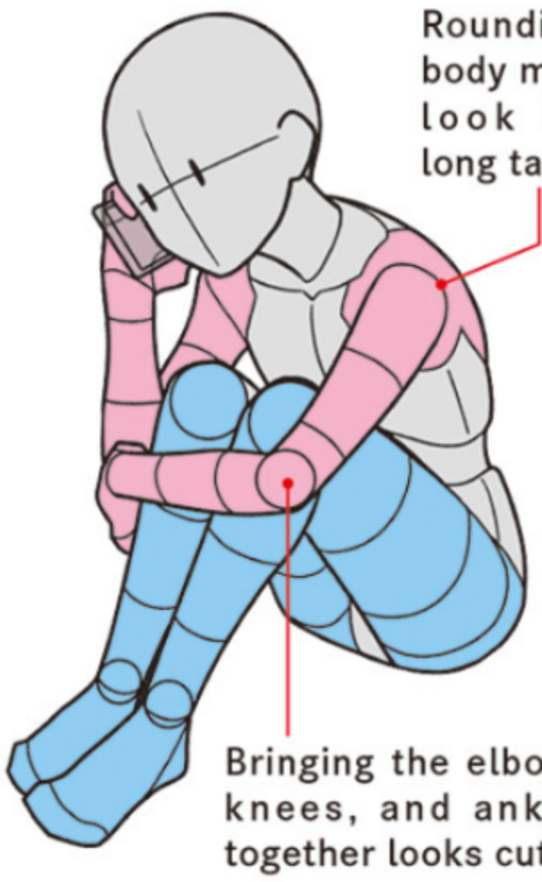
Since the phone pose has the character talking to somebody else, the expression is very important. Are they sad or are they having fun? Think about the expression and pose and express the scene through them.

Sitting with knees up adds creases to the stomach area



Kicking feet during a fun conversation

Lying down makes it look like a conversation with a friend



Rounding the body makes it look like a long talk

Bringing the elbows, knees, and ankles together looks cute

Looking at the smartphone makes him look like he's concentration on the conversation.

Make the character hold things to explain the scene. Taking notes while on the phone shows the character is busy.

Holding the smartphone between the shoulder and the ear makes the shoulder go high up

Stressed expression explains what kind of scene it is

Serious expression makes it look like he's giving orders

Note how the smartphone is held. Since it's between the ear and mouth, it's at quite an angle.

Put out the elbow for a confident feel

Putting the hand on the hip under the jacket looks cool

Putting the weight on the right leg and leaning the body a bit makes the pose more natural

Chapter 3 20

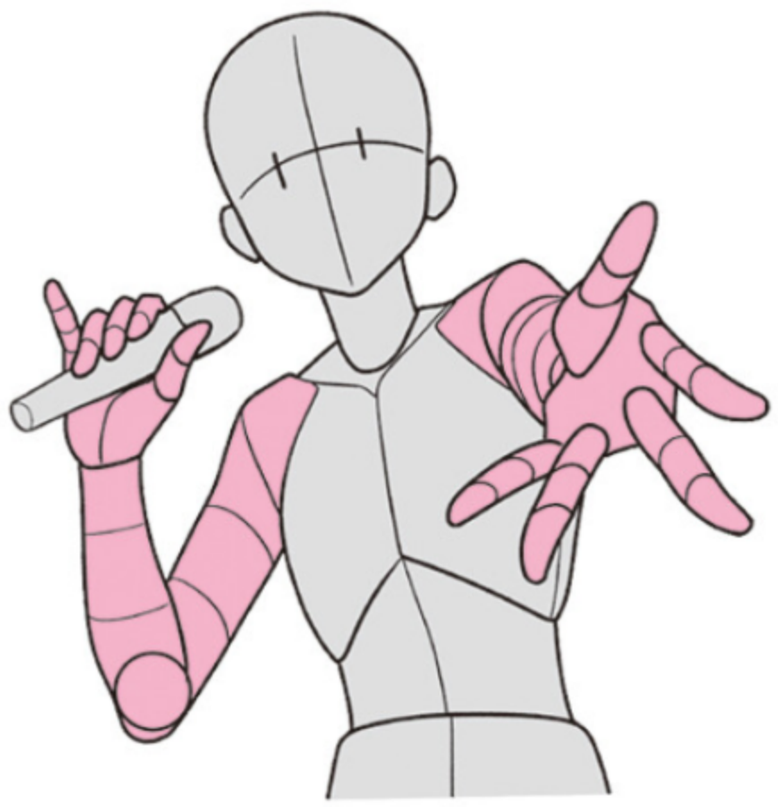
Dramatic Poses

Sing

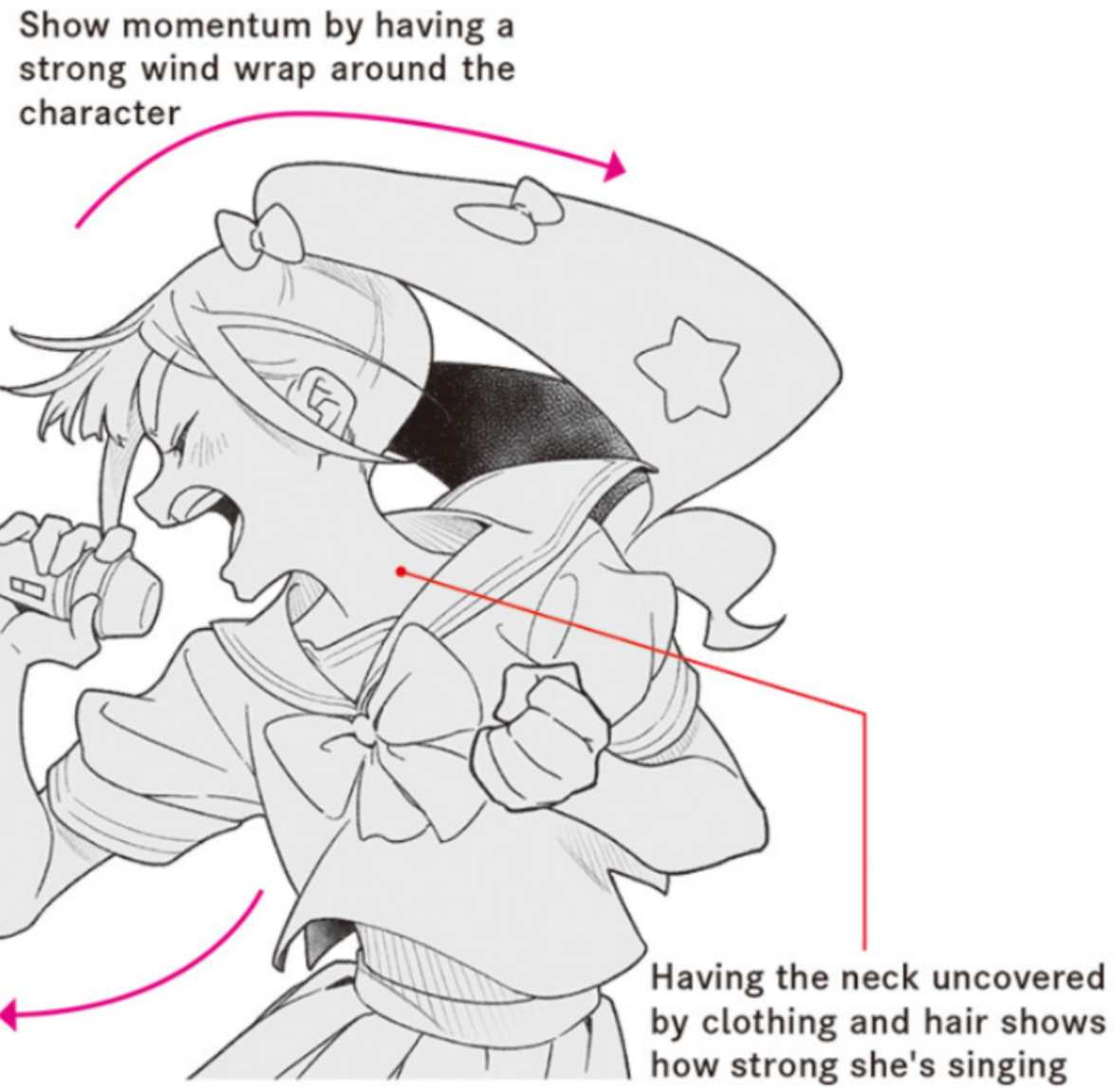
A pose where the character sings with emotion toward an audience. Think about the character's passion while deciding the hand position and face direction.

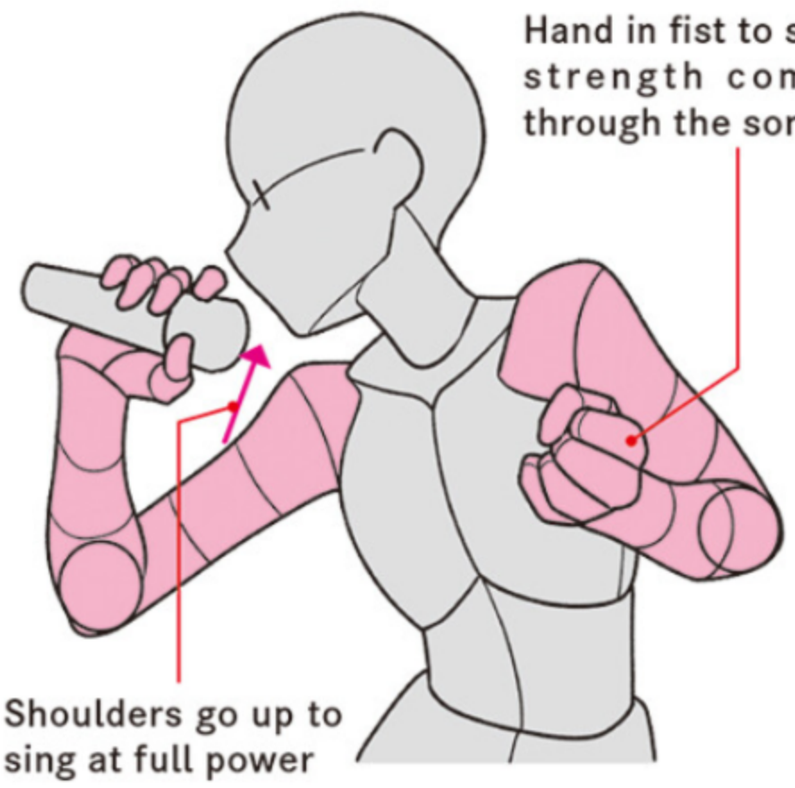
Match the Pose to the Emotion

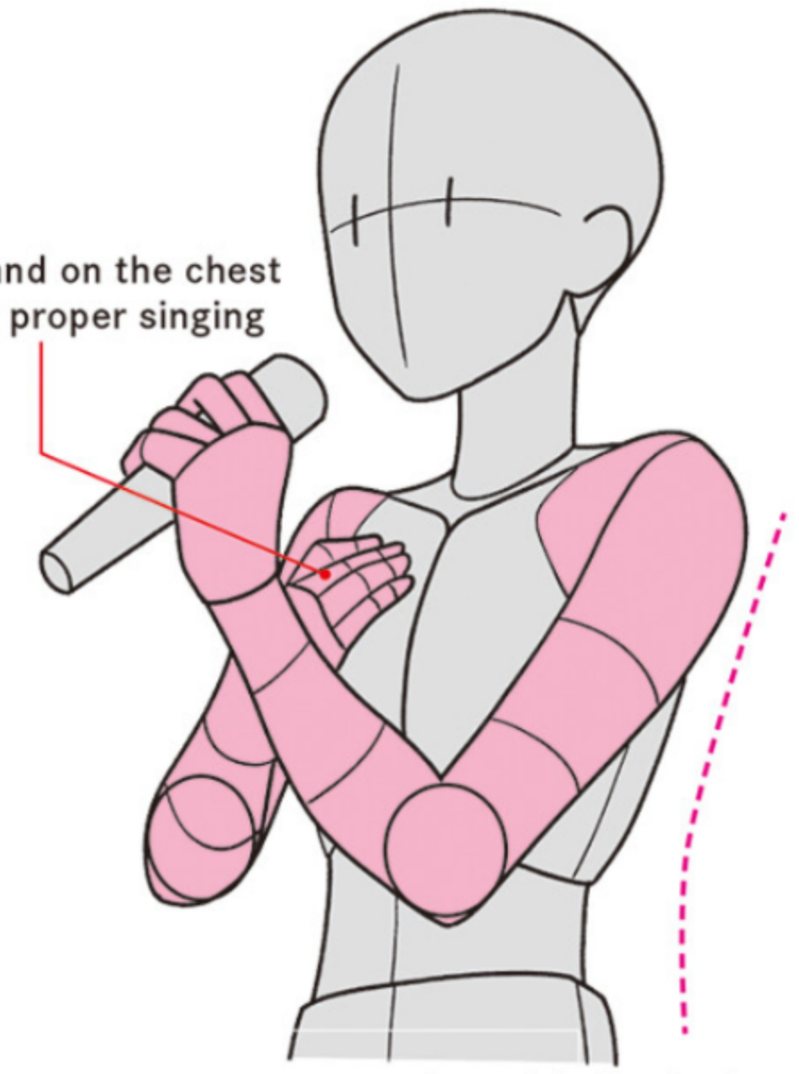
The emotion shown will change depending on the type of song sung. Slow ballads will be kinder, while powerful rock songs will be stronger, and bright pop songs will look fun. It's important to add emotion to the song. Refer to actual microphones to see how large they are and make the drawing more realistic.

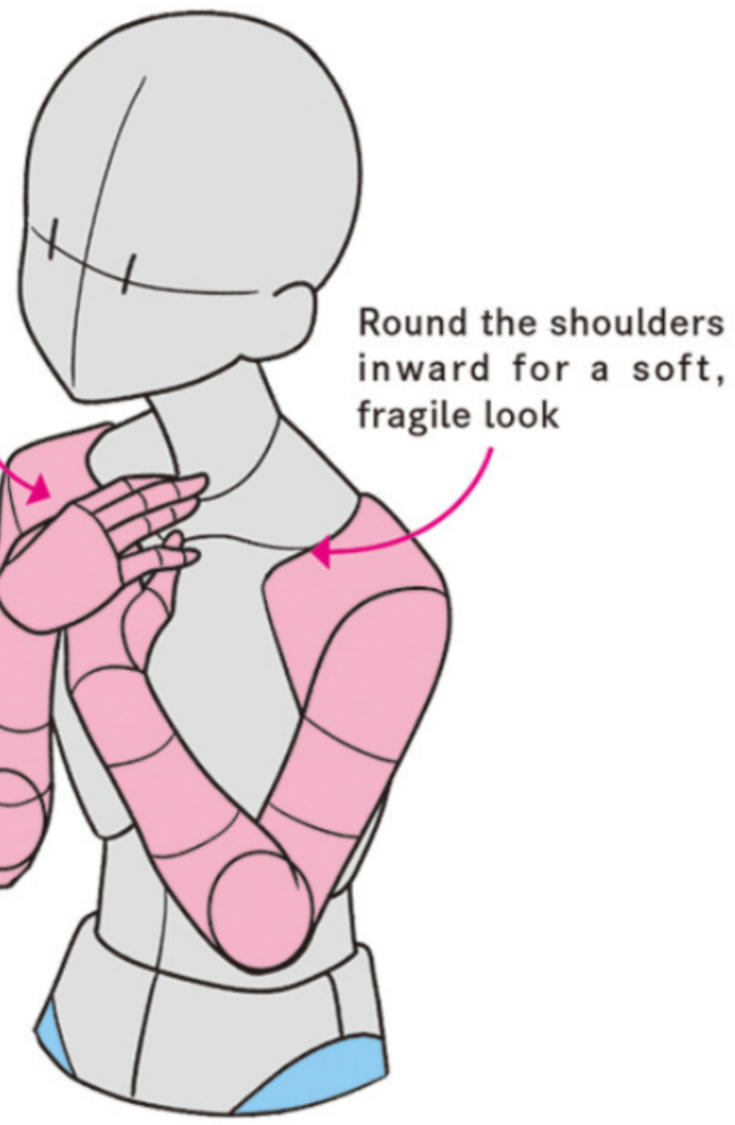


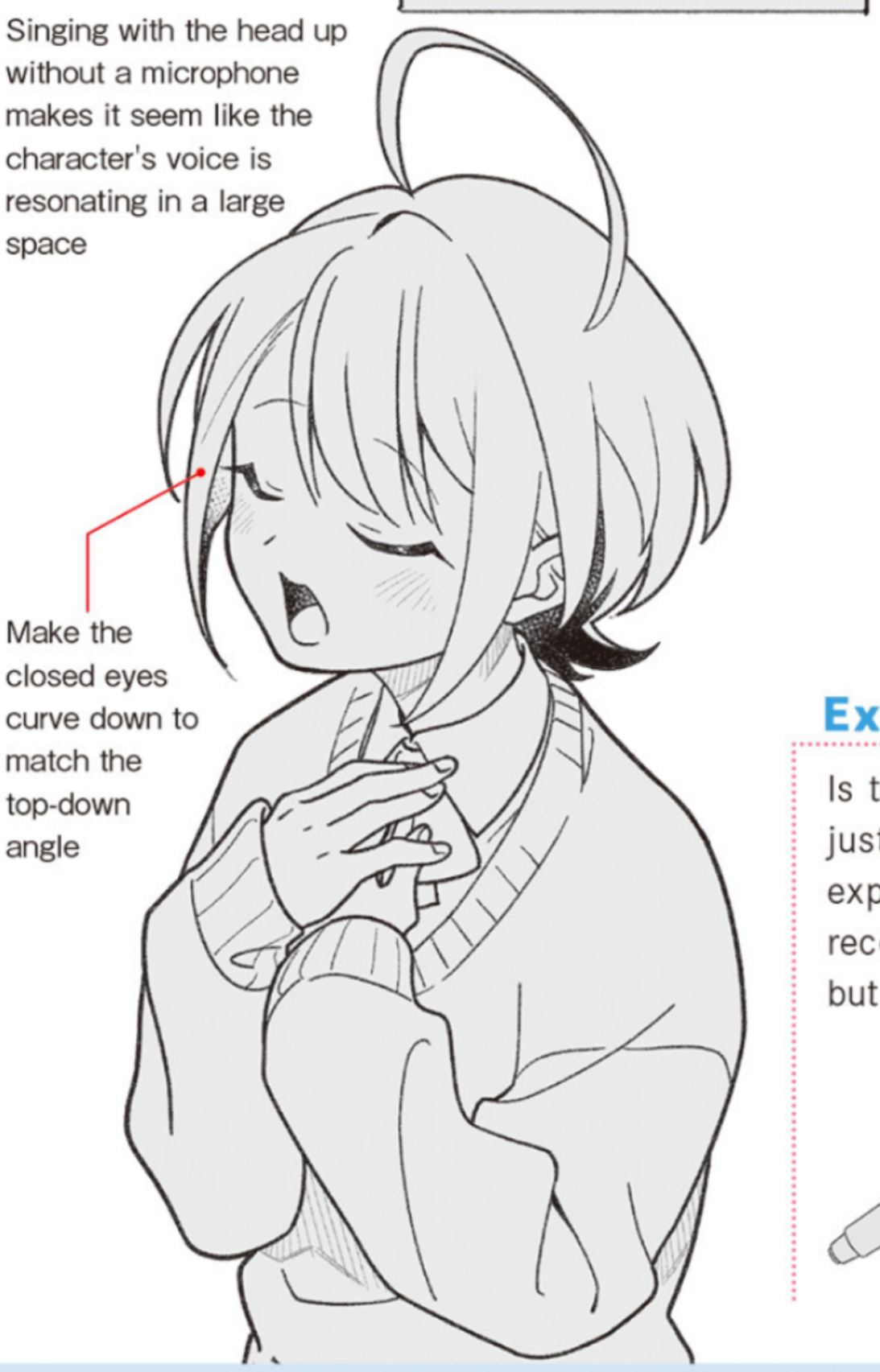
Face is seen from down-up as the character works up the audience











Expressing with hands

Is the character gripping the microphone tightly, or just putting their hand on lightly? Match the hand expression to the character's personality! It's not recommended to hold the microphone near the top, but if it looks cool, it's good for a drawing.

Chapter 3 21

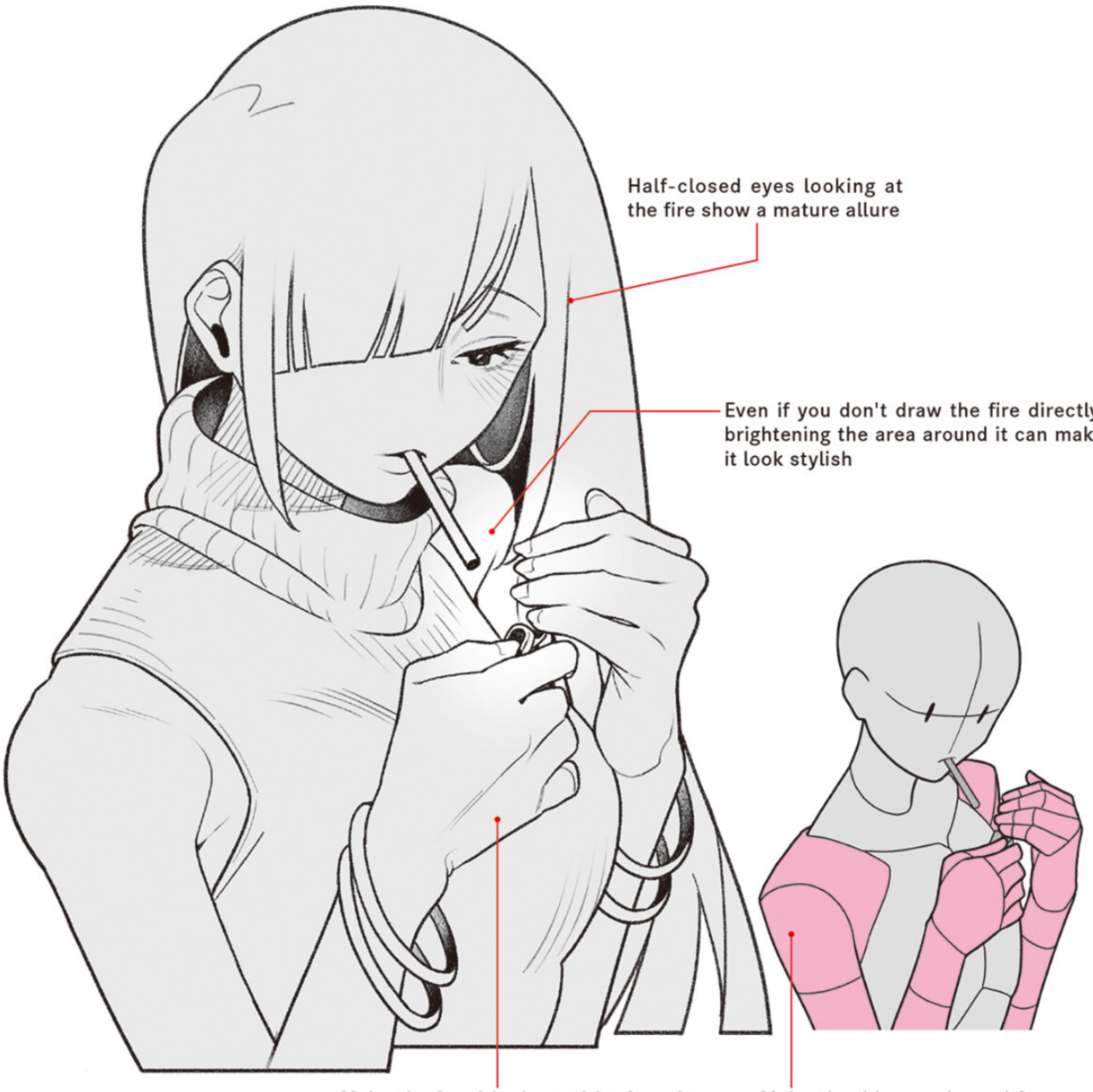
Dramatic Poses

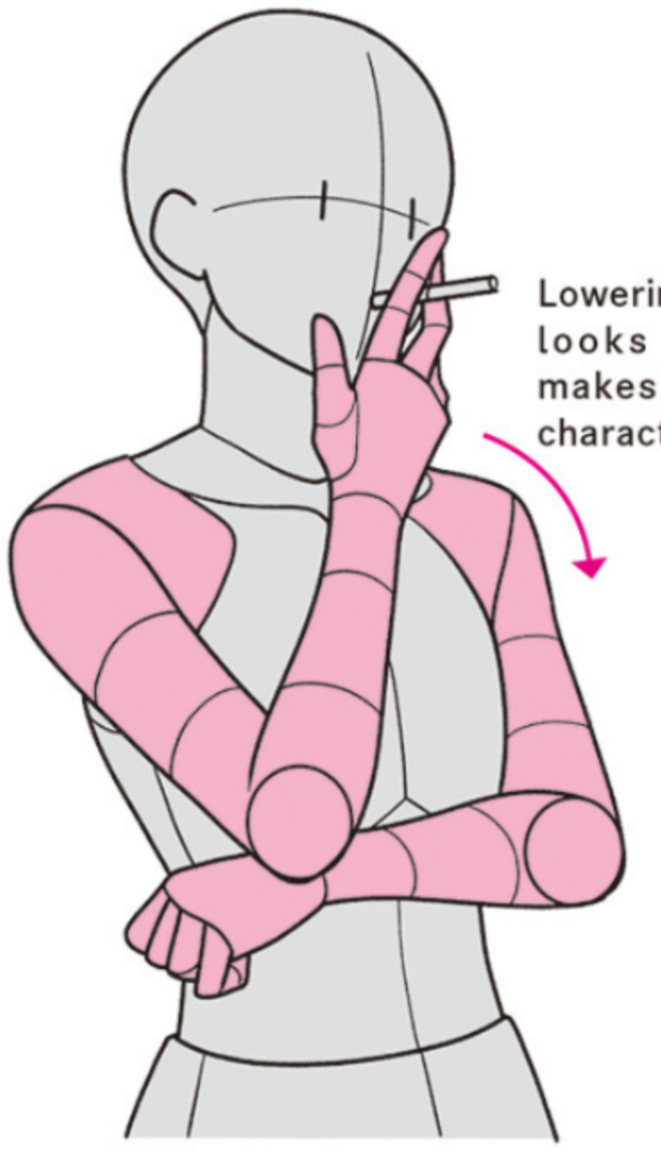
Smoke

Smoking scenes are less common in TV shows and anime now, but lighting up a cigarette and blowing out smoke just has a cool and sexy feel. Smoking a pipe can look stylish and alluring too.

Note the Hand Expression

For smoking poses, the way the hand is posed makes up 90% of the impression. Note which finger is placed where and express the character's personality, be it feminine, masculine, wild, intelligent, or otherwise.





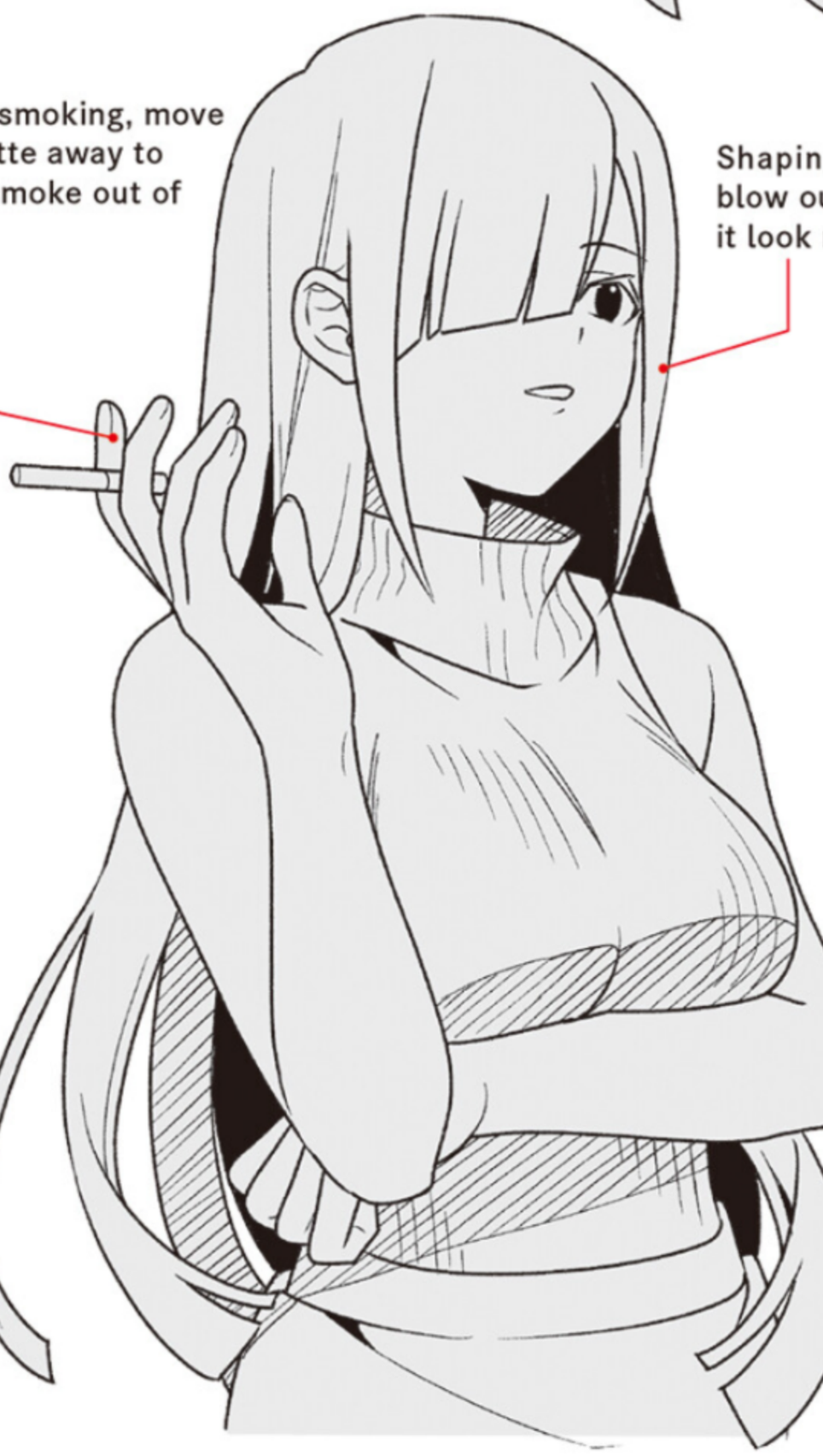
Lowering the shoulders looks confident and makes it look like the character's on a break

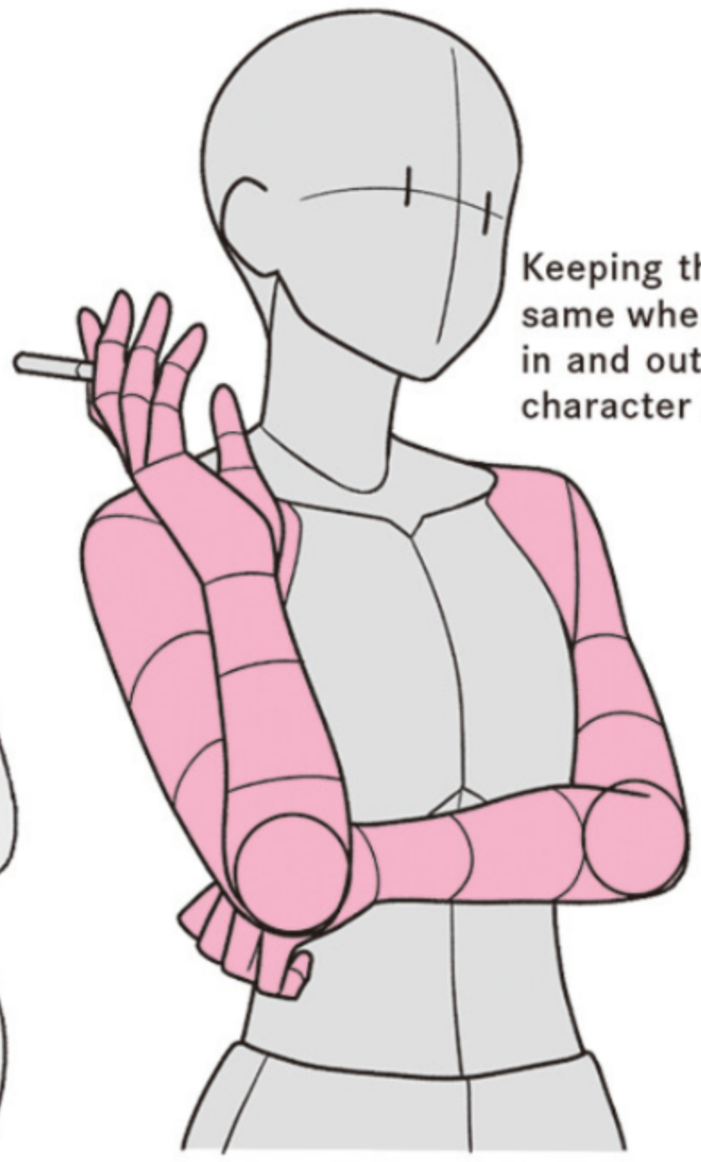
Holding the cigarette by the fingertips looks sexy

The pose is static, so make the silhouette more interesting by playing with the hair

When not smoking, move the cigarette away to keep the smoke out of the face

Shaping the mouth to blow out smoke makes it look more natural!



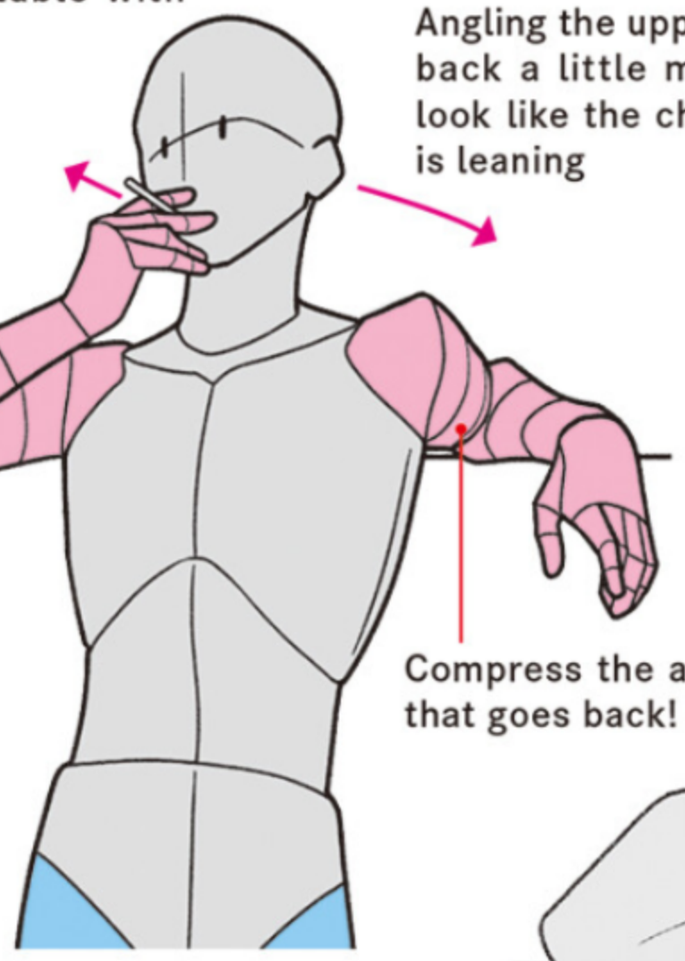


Keeping the gaze the same when breathing in and out makes the character look calm

Pointing the cigarette up makes the character look comfortable with smoking

Angling the upper body back a little makes it look like the character is leaning

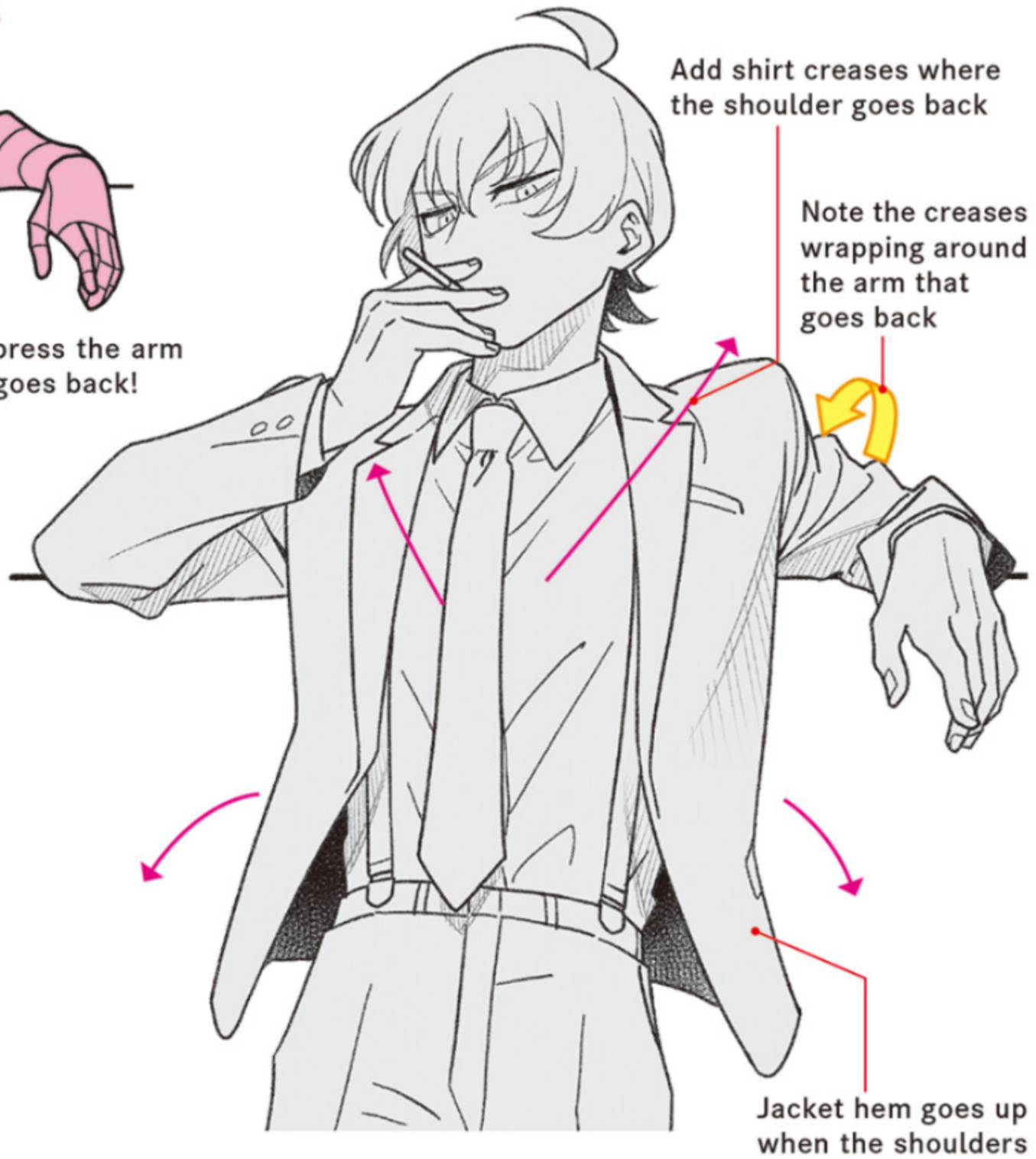
Compress the arm that goes back!



Add shirt creases where the shoulder goes back

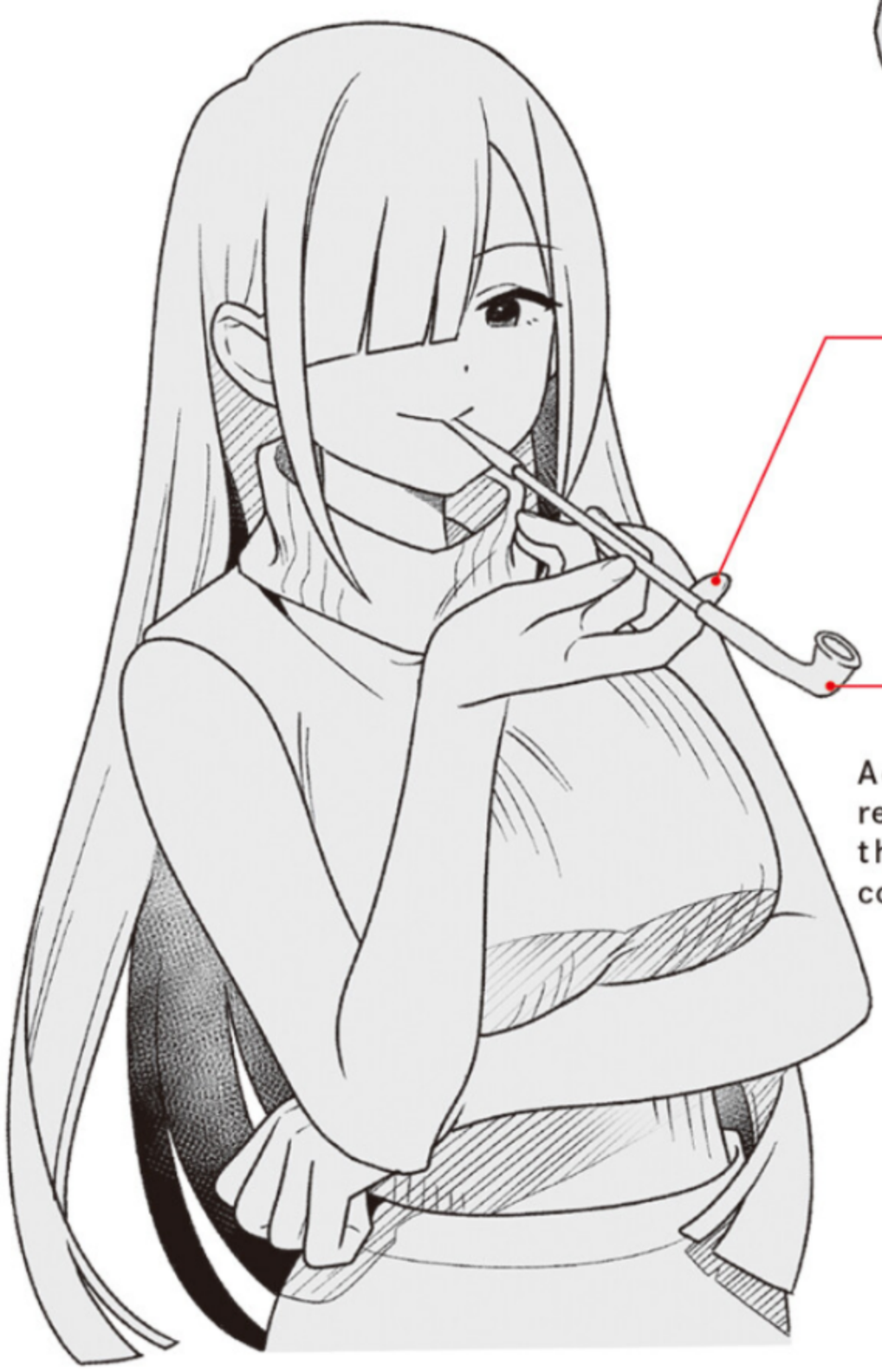
Note the creases wrapping around the arm that goes back

Jacket hem goes up when the shoulders go back



Graceful gestures and fingers emphasize a sexy atmosphere

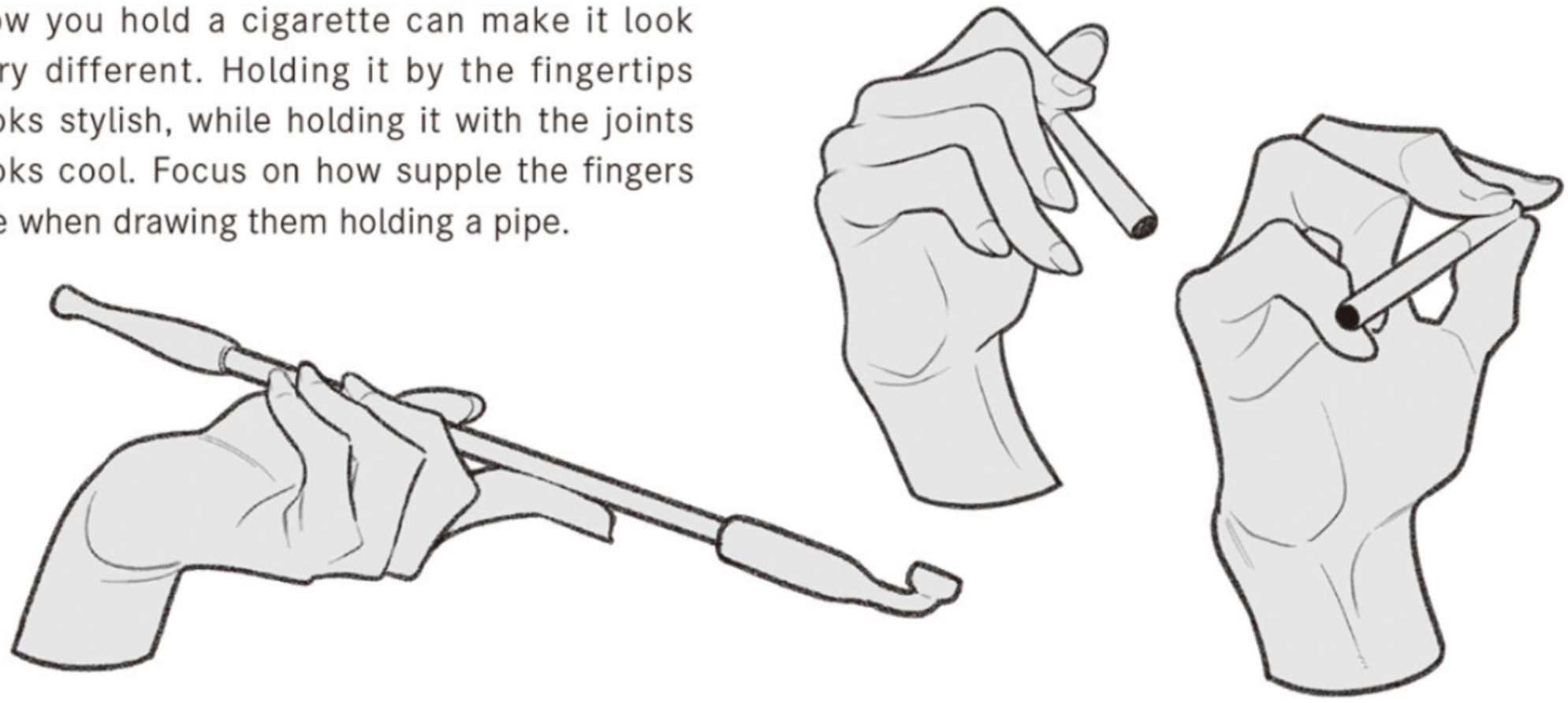
Actually look at references to draw the shape more convincingly!



Elbow going inward looks chic

Expressing with hands

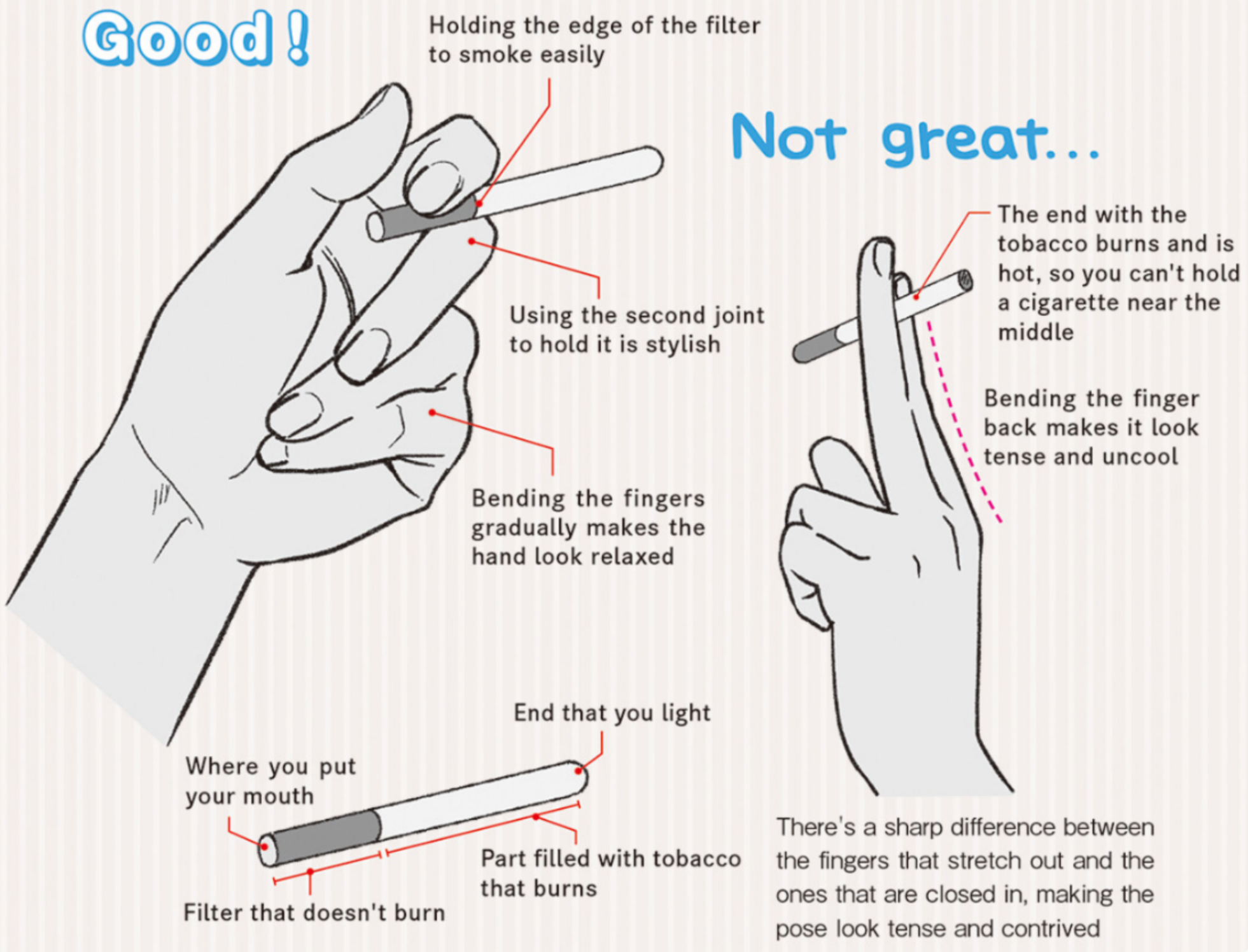
How you hold a cigarette can make it look very different. Holding it by the fingertips looks stylish, while holding it with the joints looks cool. Focus on how supple the fingers are when drawing them holding a pipe.



Column

How to Hold Cigarettes

Even if you've drawn the pose in a cool way, it'll look weird if the cigarette is held oddly. The way you hold a cigarette shows individuality. Here are a few common examples. Pay attention to the details of the hands.



Chapter 3

22

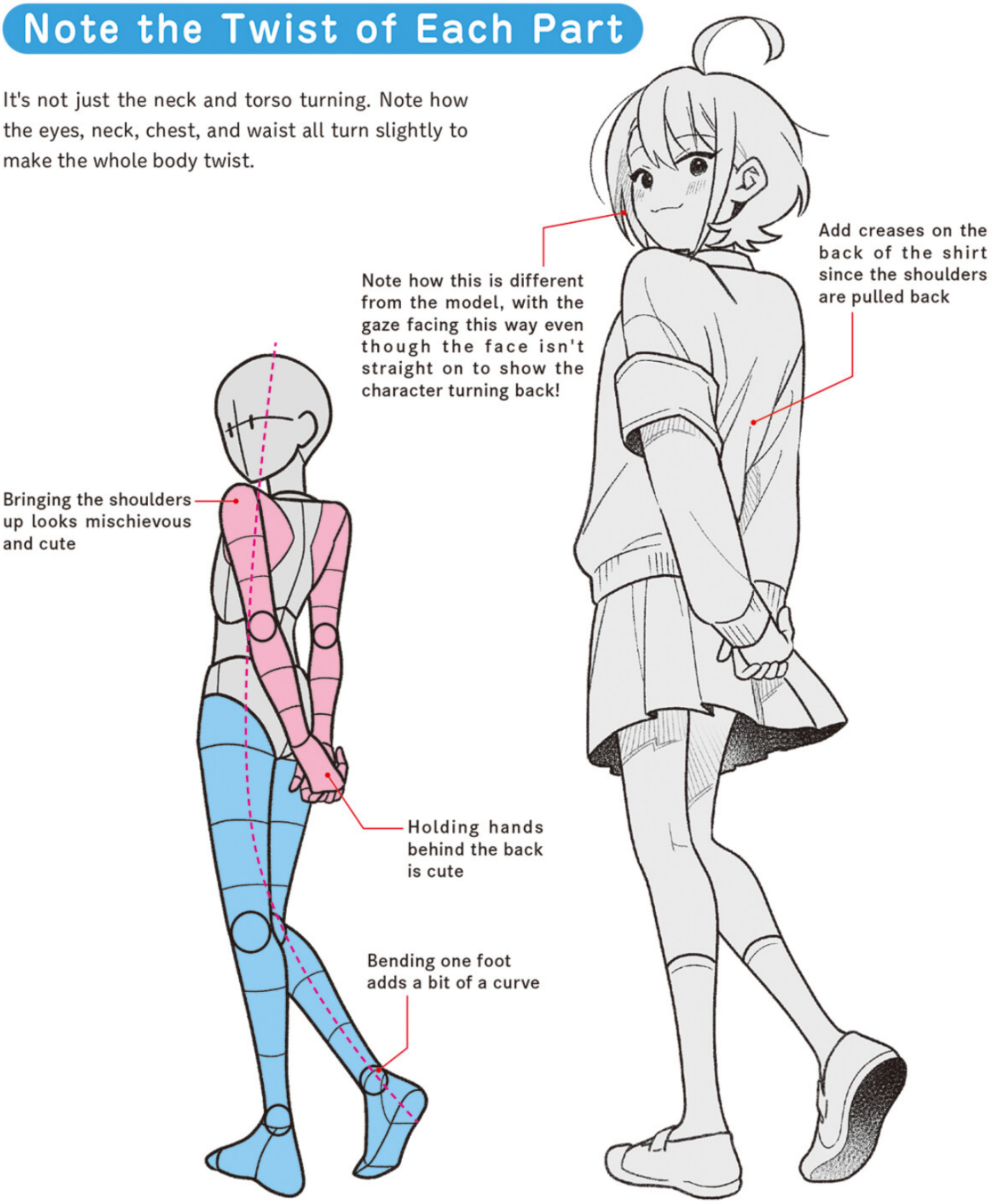
Dramatic Poses

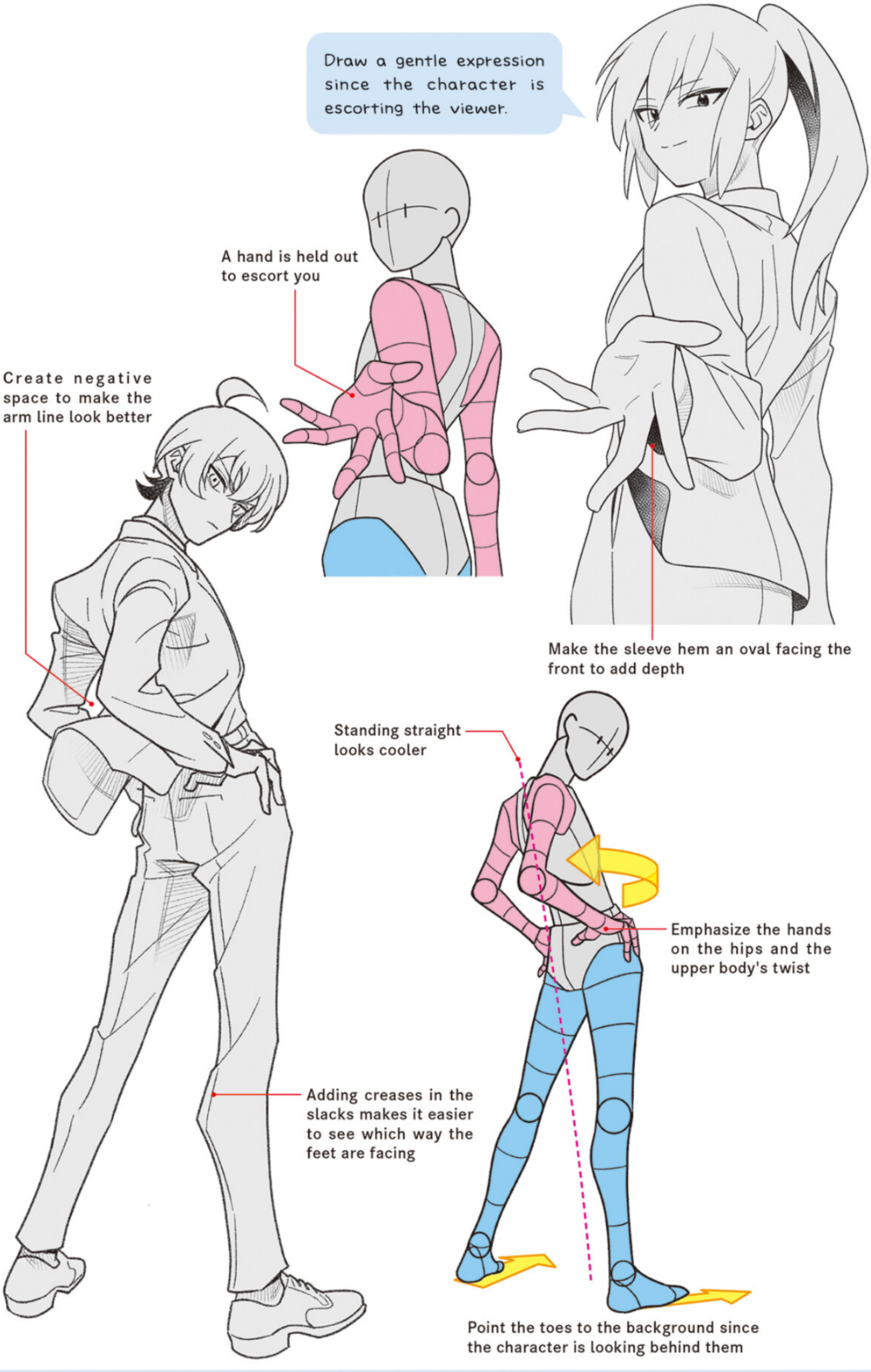
Turn Around

A pose which shows the back with the face turning around to look this way. If you don't pay attention to the body's range of movement, it'll look unnatural, like the neck has broken. Draw the head turning along with the gaze.

Note the Twist of Each Part

It's not just the neck and torso turning. Note how the eyes, neck, chest, and waist all turn slightly to make the whole body twist.




Draw a gentle expression since the character is escorting the viewer.
A hand is held out to escort you
Create negative space to make the arm line look better
Make the sleeve hem an oval facing the front to add depth
Standing straight looks cooler
Emphasize the hands on the hips and the upper body's twist
Adding creases in the slacks makes it easier to see which way the feet are facing
Point the toes to the background since the character is looking behind them

Chapter 3

23

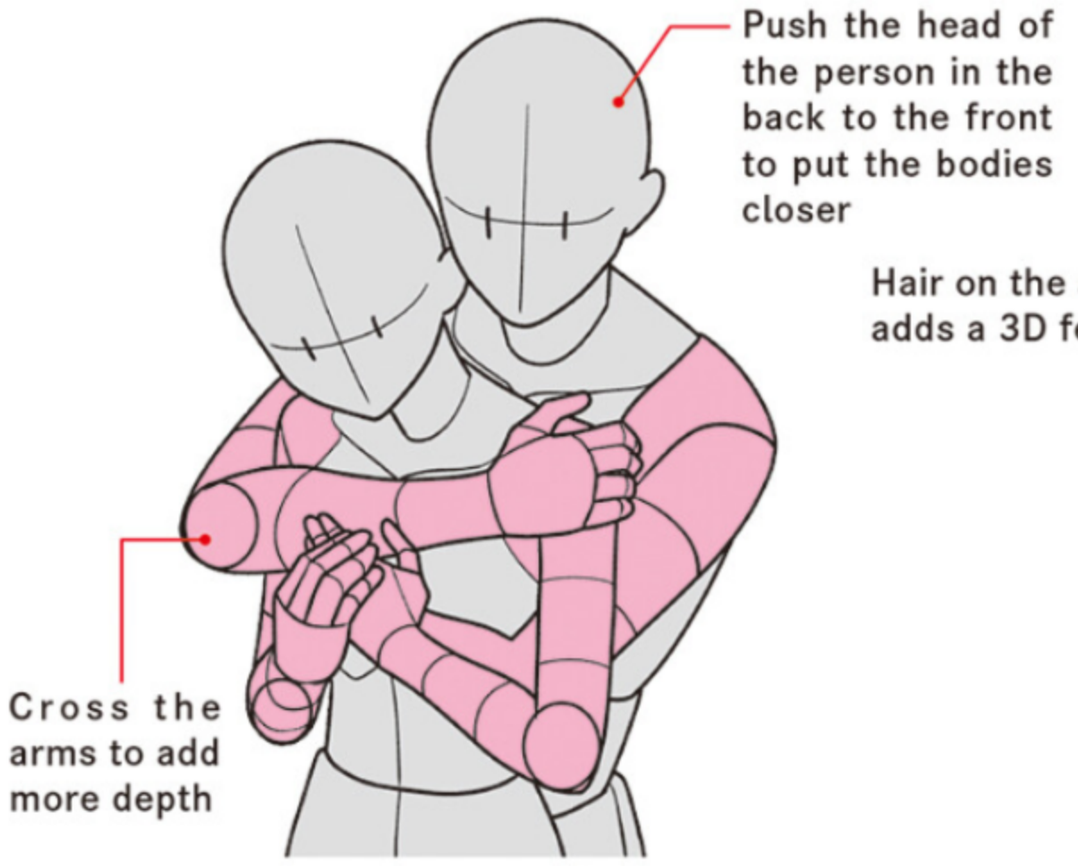
Dramatic Poses

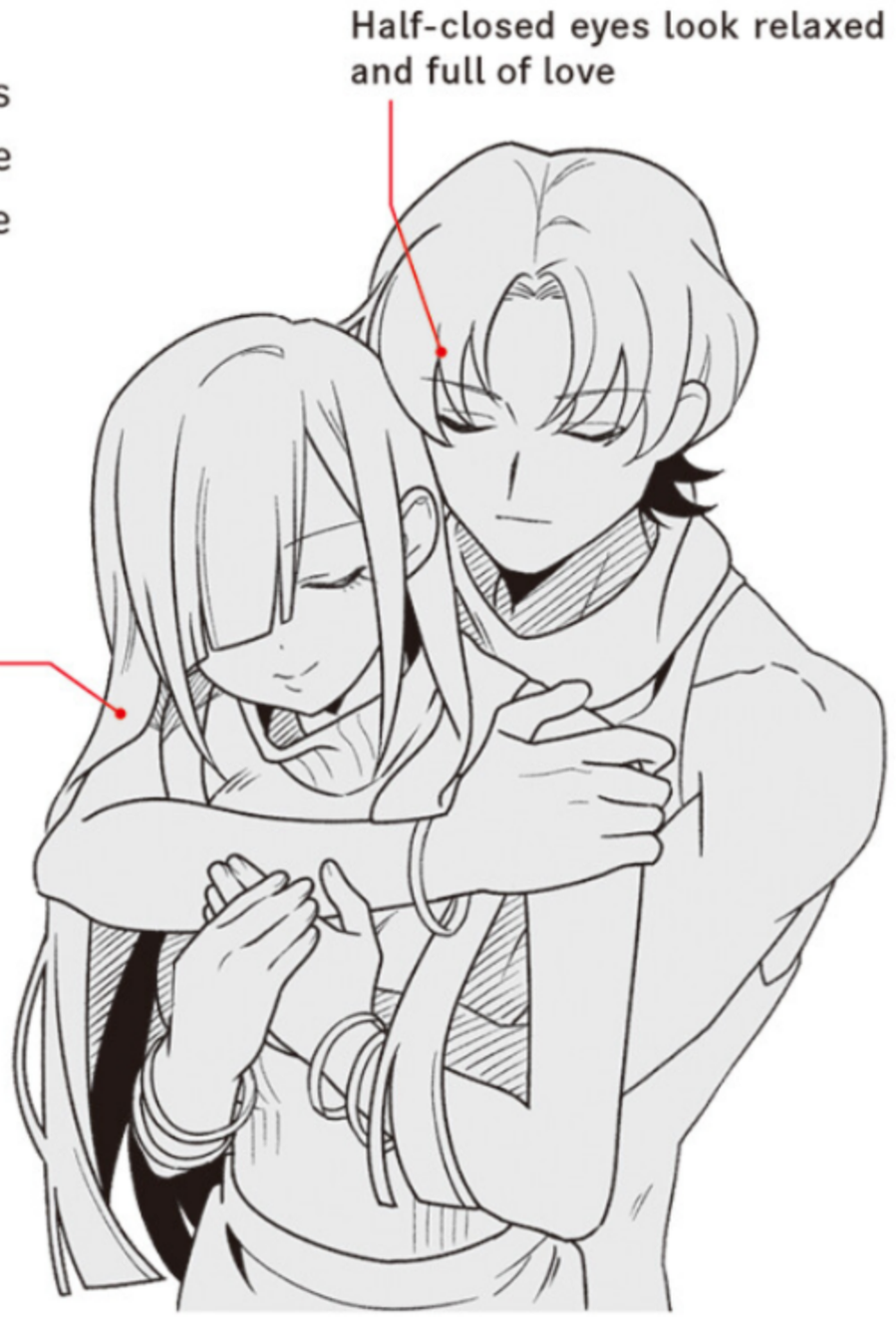
Embrace

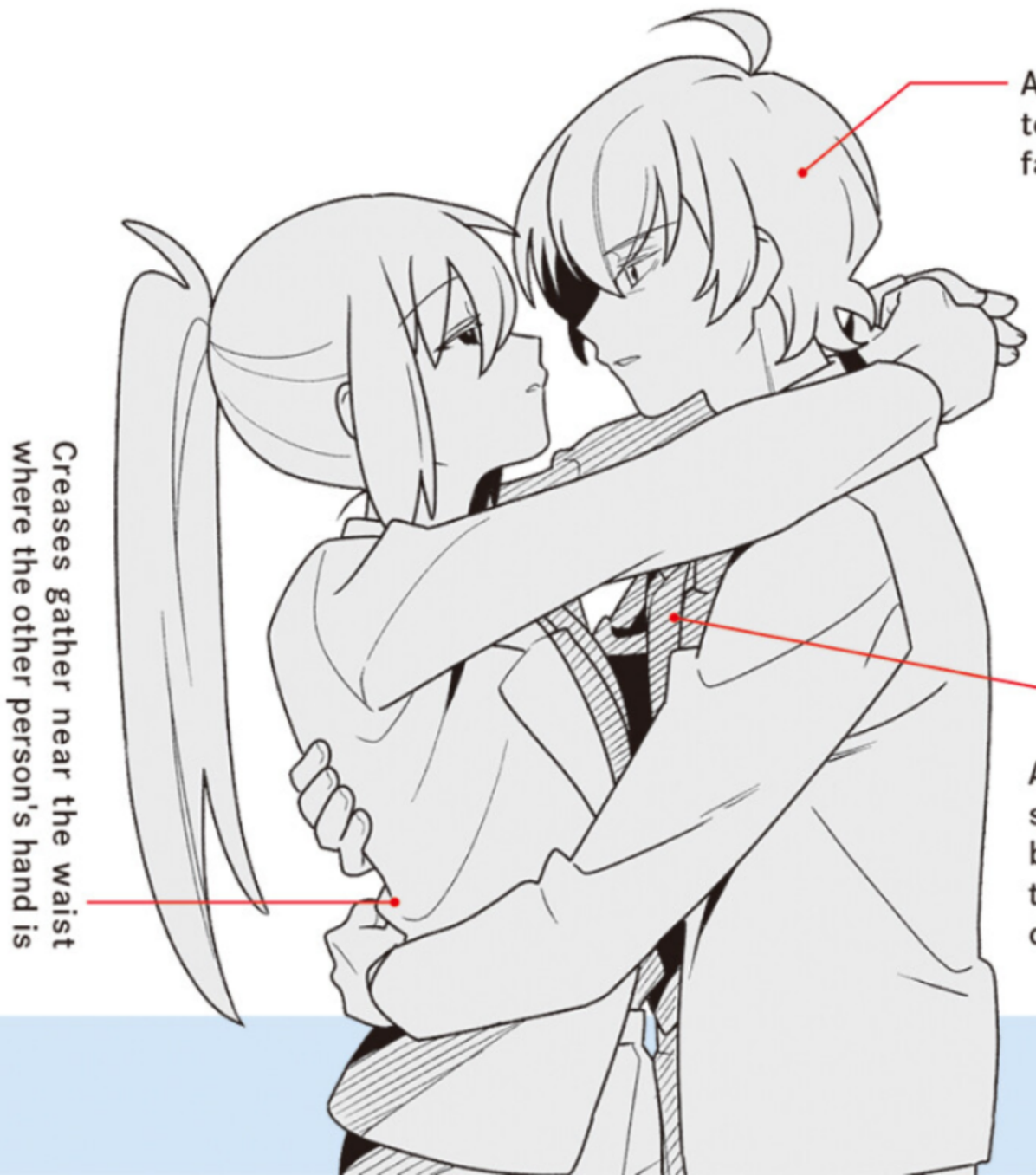
An embracing pose has two people's bodies close together, which makes it difficult to draw. Focus on how close the bodies are and be careful about how parts overlap.

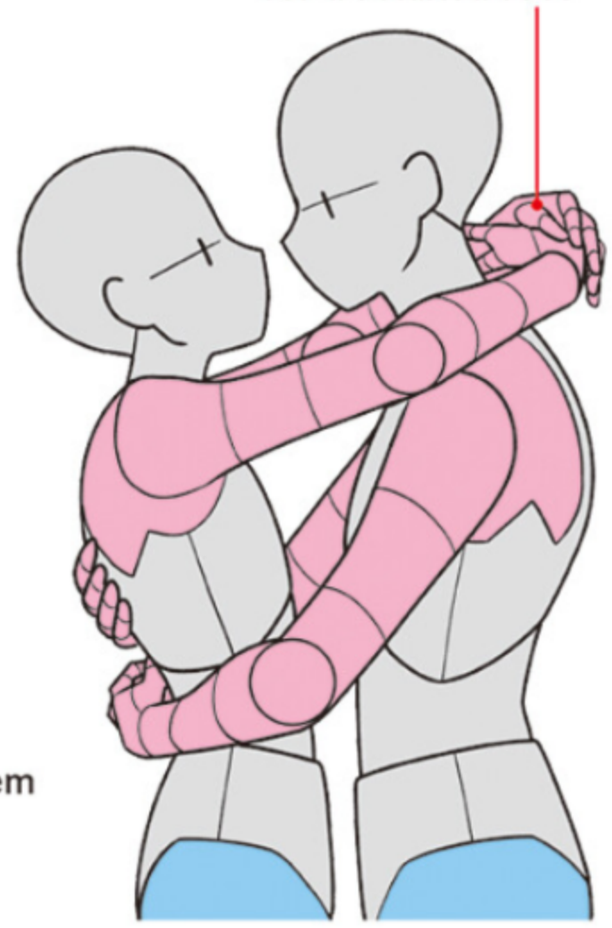
Draw the Parts You Can't See

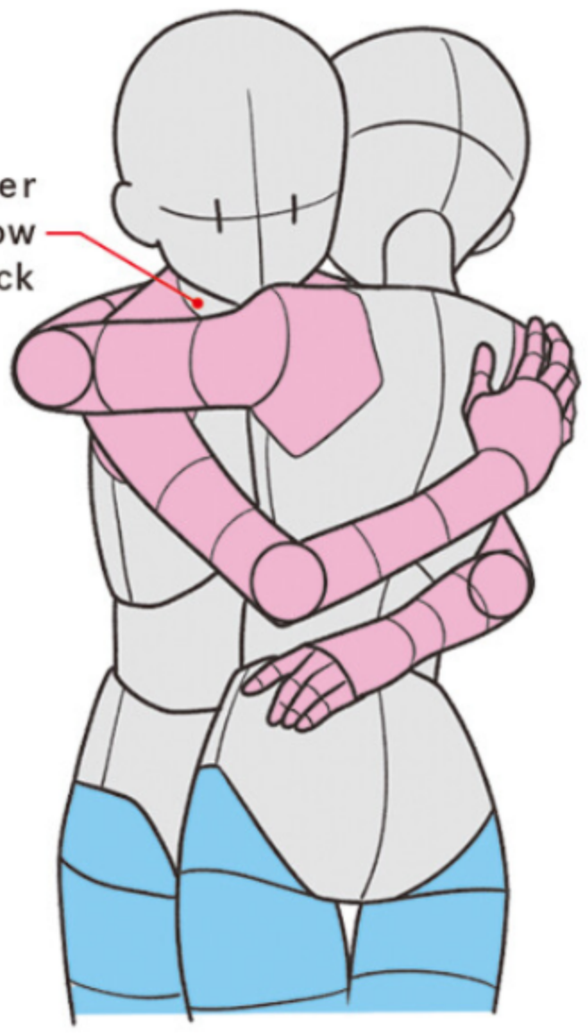
When sketching an embrace, it's important to draw the parts that are hidden by the arms and body. Knowing where the parts you can't see go will make the final pose more convincing.





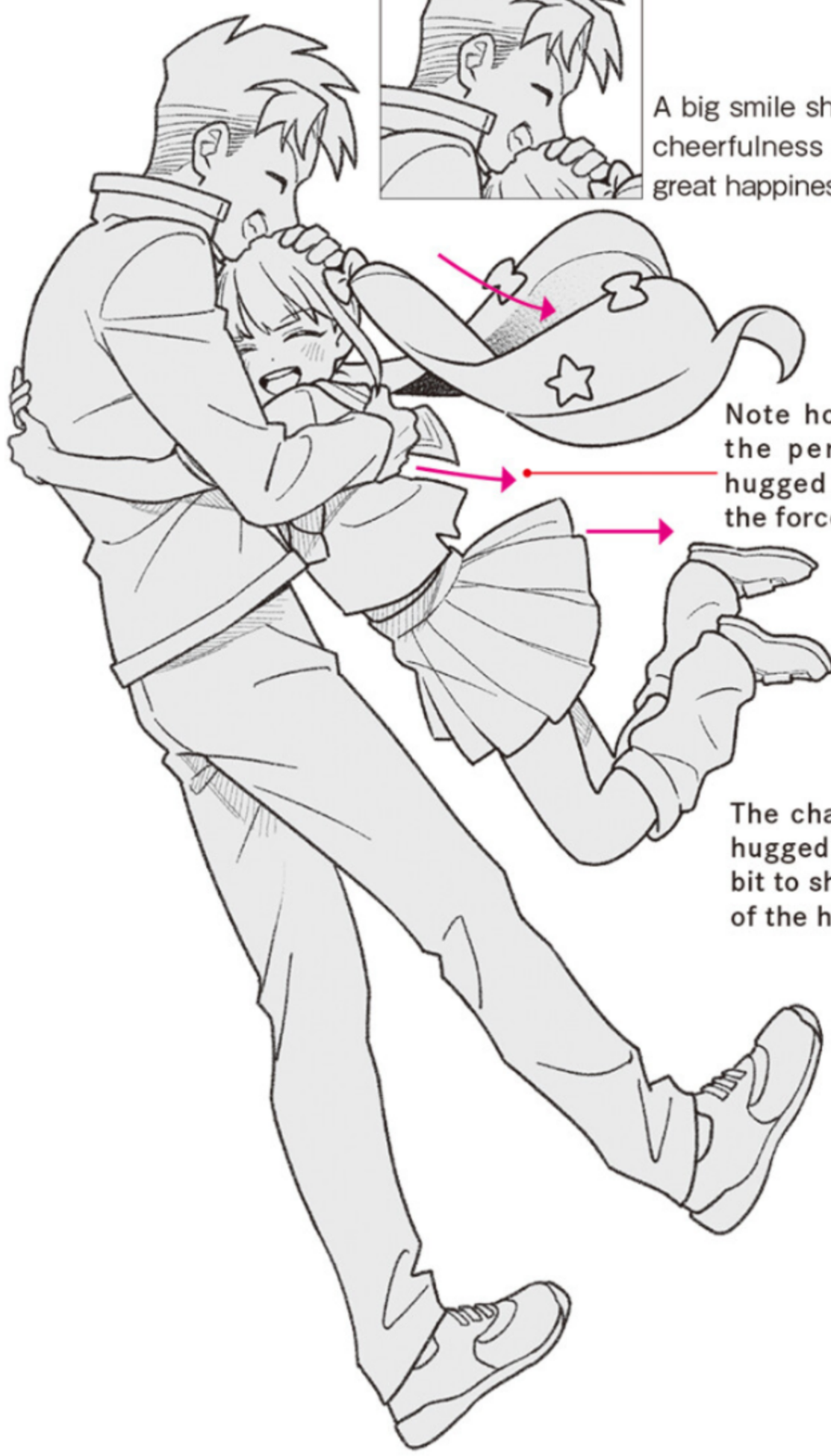






Chin goes on the other person's shoulder to show that the head is in the back

A big smile shows cheerfulness and great happiness



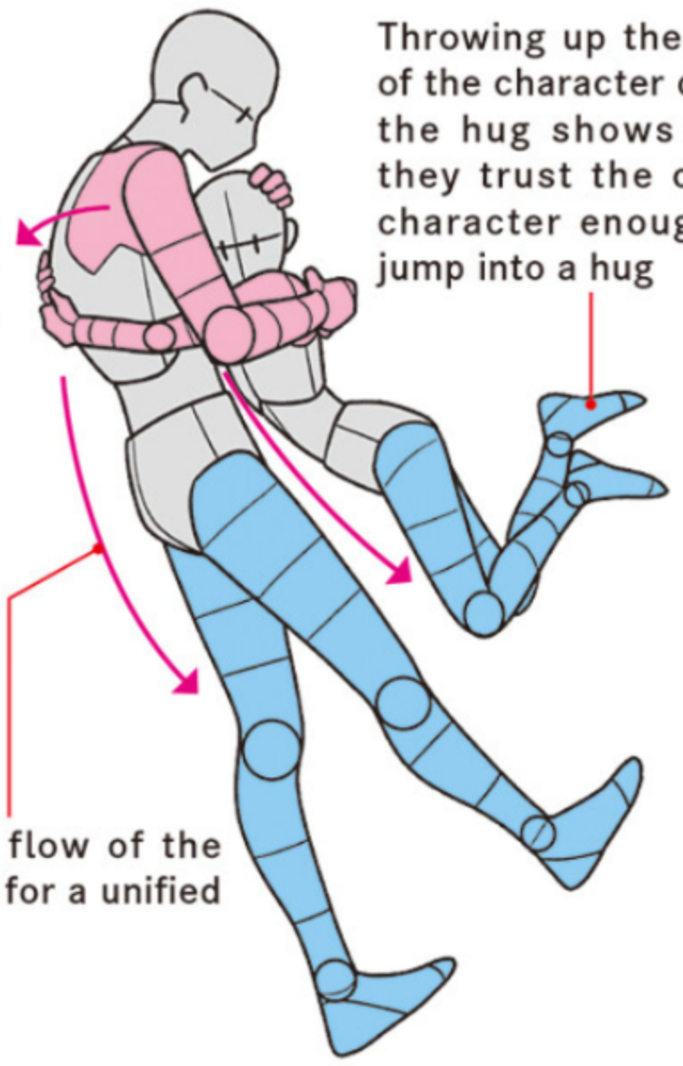
Note how parts of the person being hugged sway from the force of the hug

The ends of the eyebrows are lowered to show relief

Add a cheek line to show the face coming together for a cute and gentle look

The character being hugged falls back a bit to show the force of the hug

Throwing up the legs of the character doing the hug shows that they trust the other character enough to jump into a hug



Match the flow of the two bodies for a unified drawing

Chapter 3

24

Dramatic Poses

Multi-Character Layouts

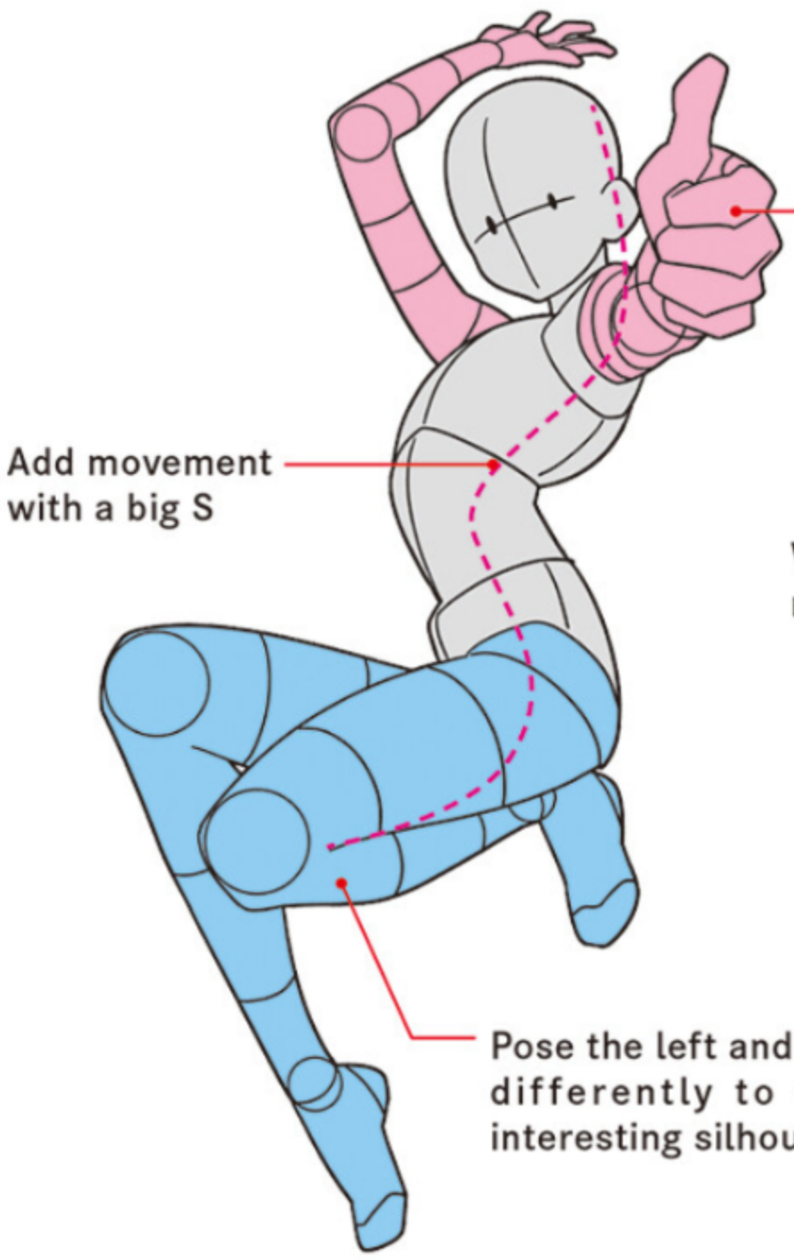
Layouts with multiple characters show off each character's individuality! It might seem hard since you have to draw many people, but you should still give it a try. We'll analyze the drawing on this book's cover and explain how to do multi-character layouts.

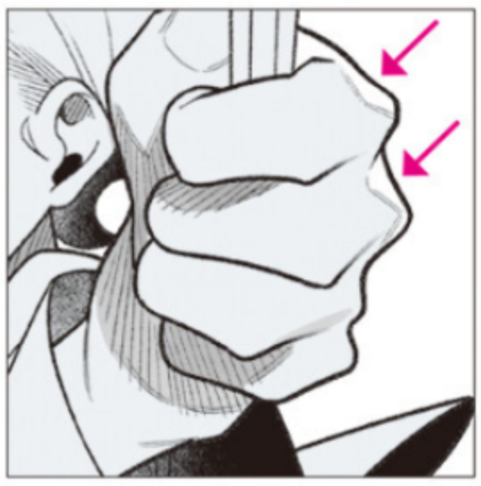
Look at the Big Picture

How the picture comes together is important for multi-character drawings! Some drawings have characters looking out of the canvas, while others have them looking inward, but this time, we have them all looking to the left for a unified look. Place characters while thinking about the big picture and don't let yourself get caught up in the details.

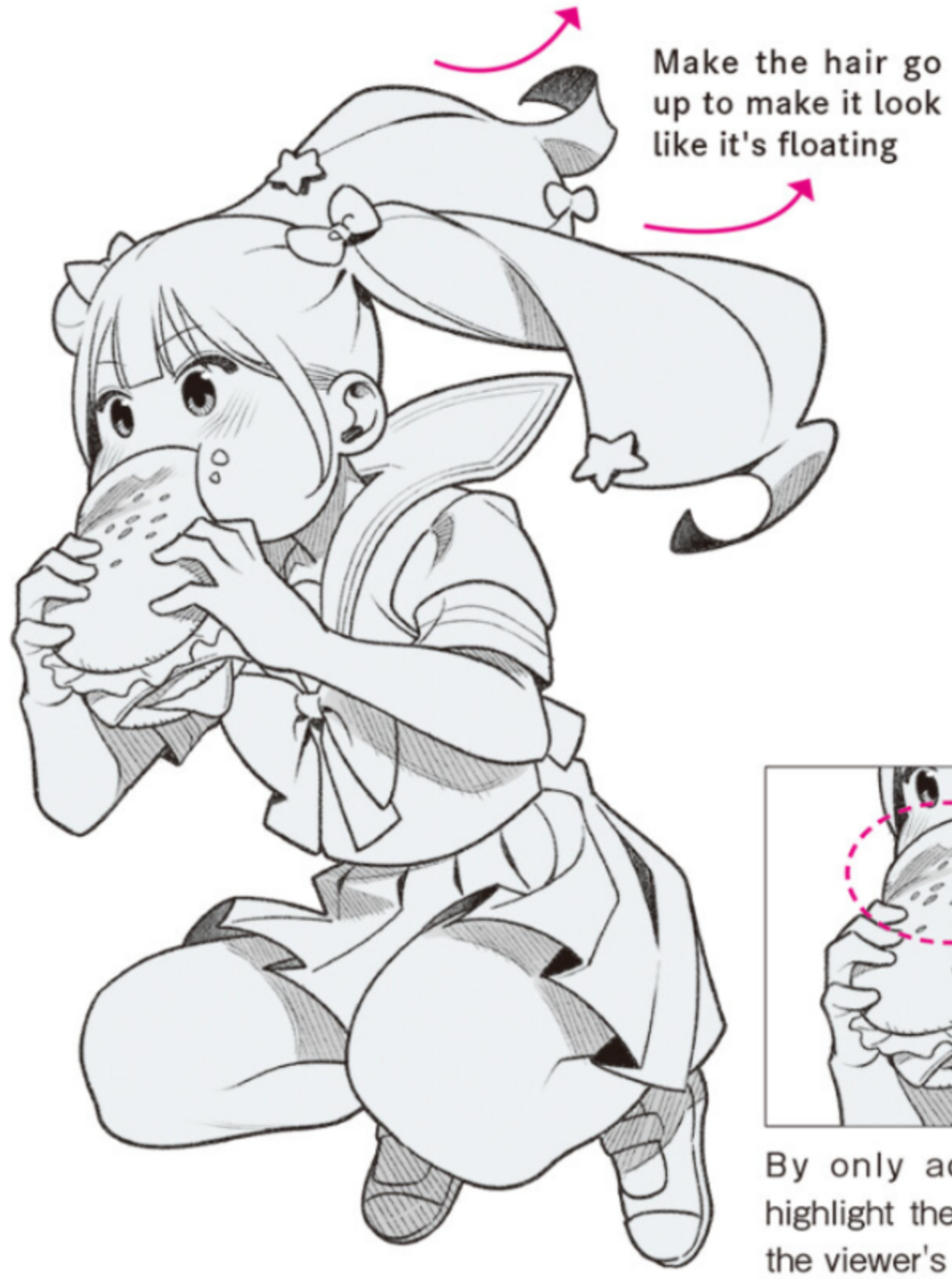
Each Character's Pose

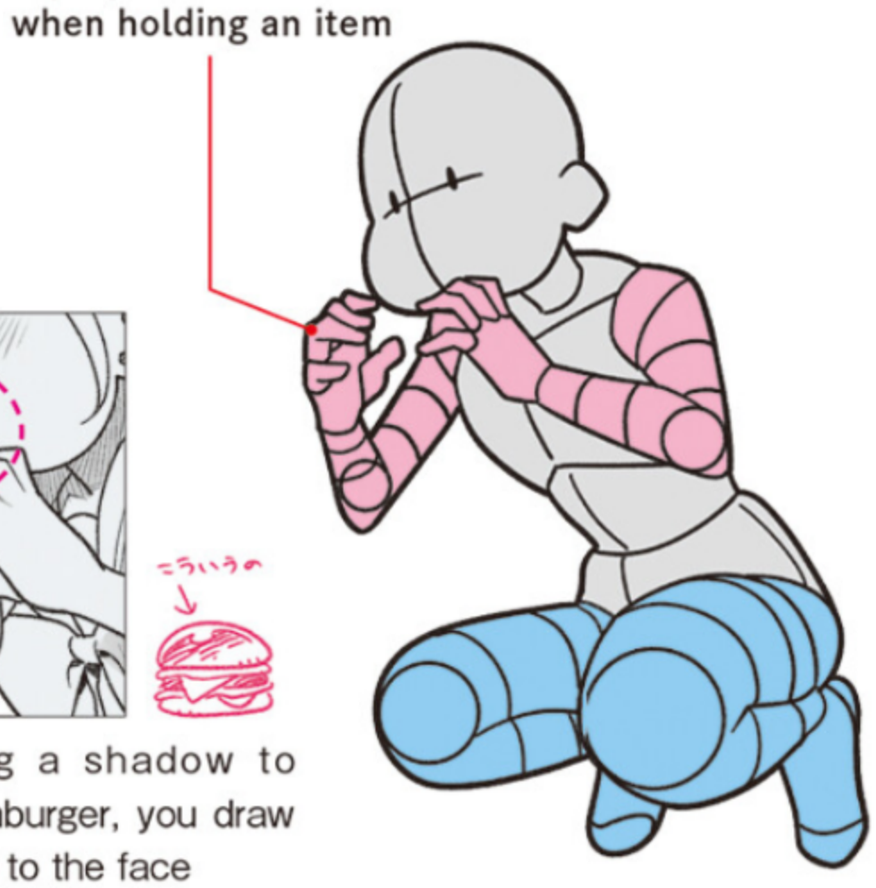
Let's look at each character's pose and analyze it. Pay attention to the parts that are hidden.

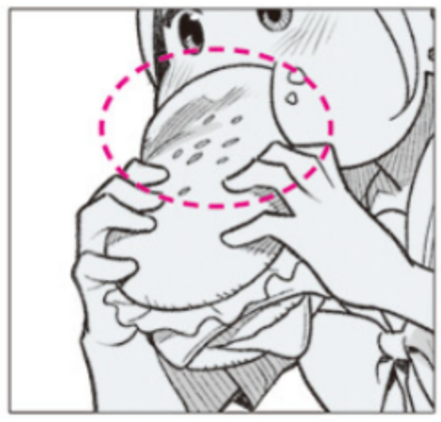




Add extra highlights to the main character to make them stand out!







By only adding a shadow to highlight the hamburger, you draw the viewer's eyes to the face

Add a gradation to the sword's side to make the drawing less monotonous

Add light and dark areas around the face to draw the viewer's eyes toward it

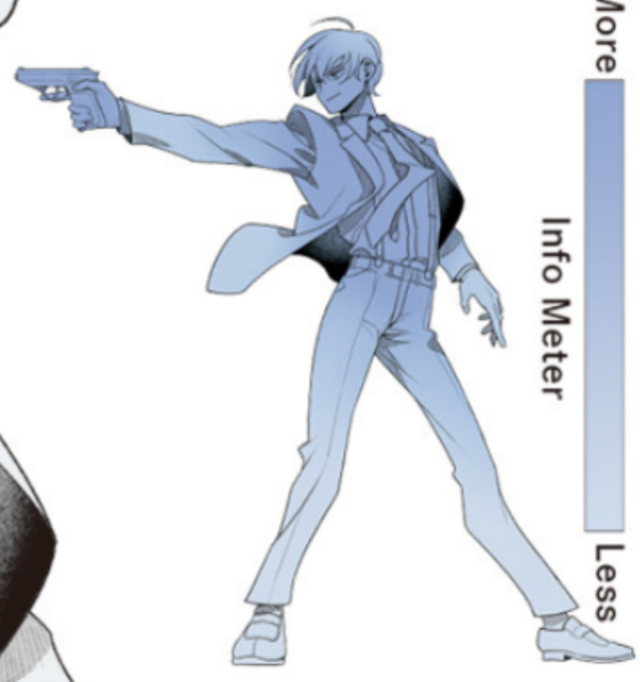
Create long straight lines with the body and sword

Use the bent left foot to show strength and accentuate the silhouette

Add creases for impact to the arm with the sword because it is a highlight of the drawing

Make the cloth wrap around to add movement to the slacks, which can feel boring otherwise

Exaggerated fluttering combined with the stance makes the character look like somebody you should pay attention to



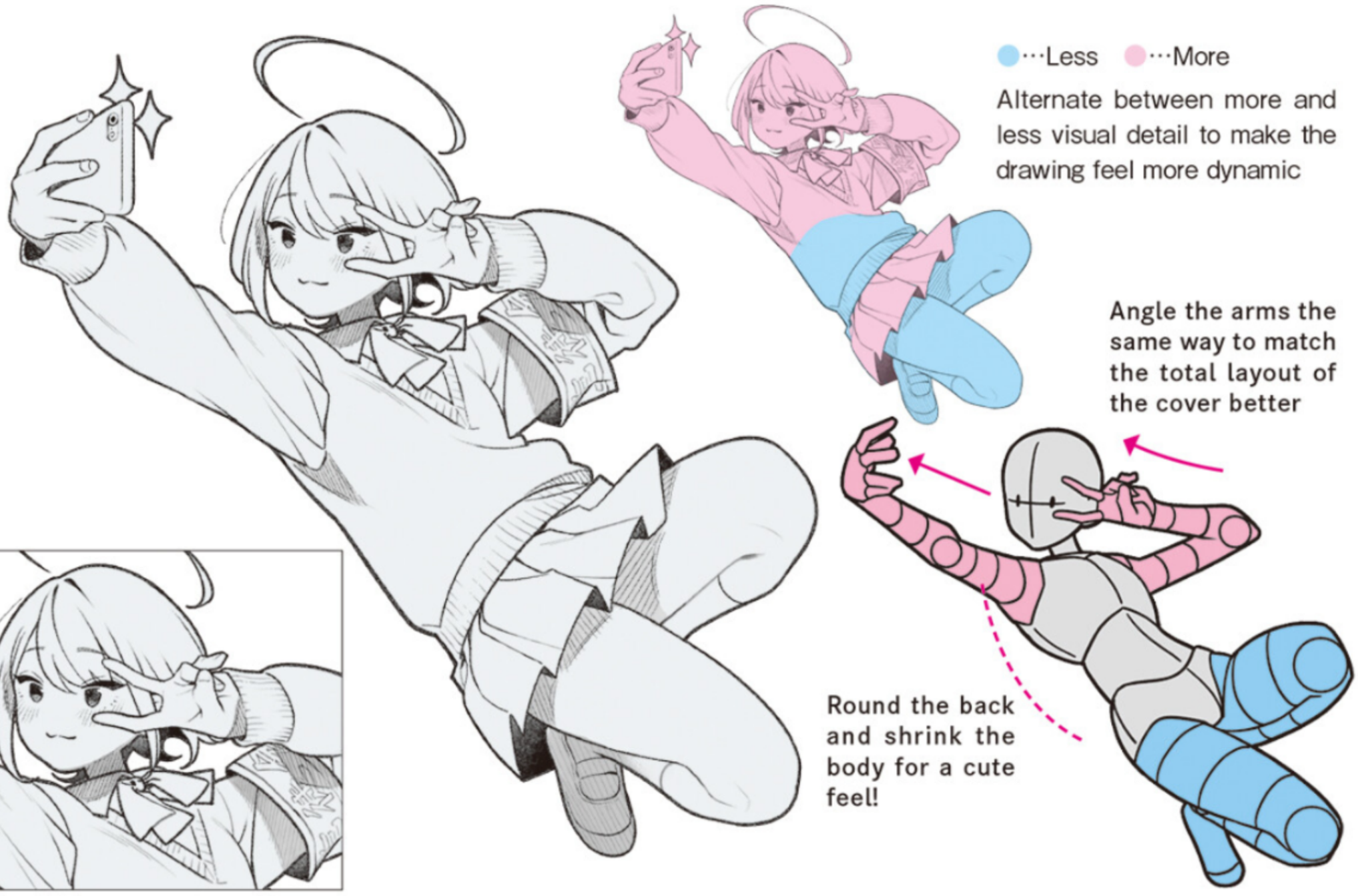
Have fewer visual details the further away you get from the gun, so that the gun, which is the focus of the drawing, stands out. In this drawing, there is more visual information in the gun and around the face.

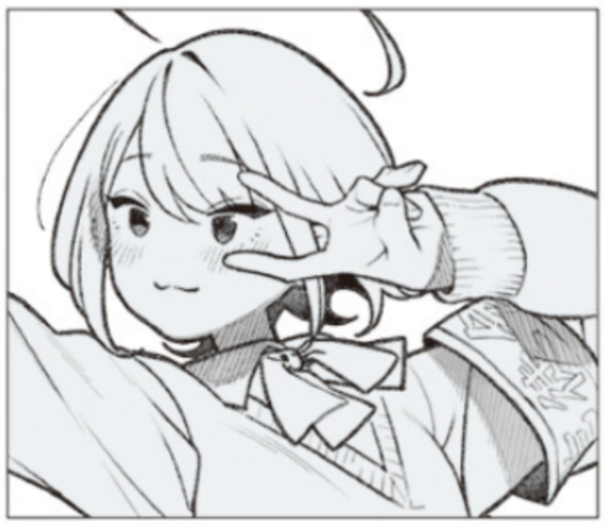
The shoulder goes up but the chin goes in for a cool silhouette!

Lead the eye to the gun by blowing the cloth in the same direction

Make it look like the left hand is holding an imaginary gun holster to make the left hand look more interesting

Create a gentle S in the legs to make a nice flow for the entire body

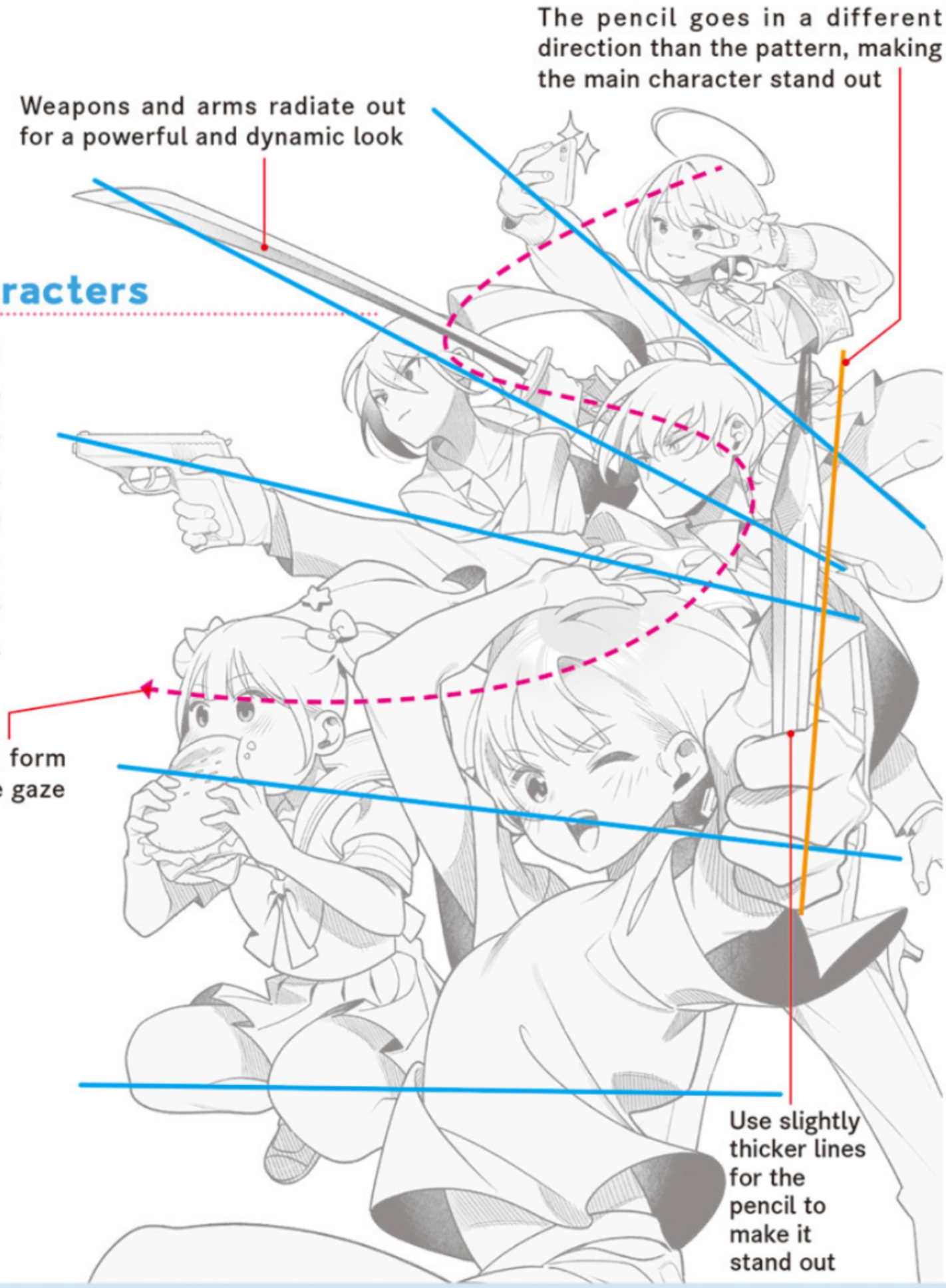




Add detail around the face to add depth and draw the viewer's eyes in!

Placing multiple characters

The drawing radiates out from the bottom right to the top left, and the positions of the arms, weapons, and gazes match that. If you connect the characters' faces, it creates an S-shape from the top to the bottom, which naturally guides the viewer's gaze.



Special Interview

Hiromasa Ueda and KawaiiSensei

Talking about Poses!

We've invited a special guest, Ueda Hiromasa, an expert in drawing and manga techniques, to share his thoughts about posing characters!

I want to get better at posing!

KawaiiSensei (K): Mr. Hiromasa, do you have any hard rules for posing?

Hiromasa Ueda (U): If the shoulders, eyes, hips, and everything are all parallel, the drawing will look boring without any movement, so I think being aware of contrapposto is the first step. I think you mentioned on an X Space (audio broadcast) that you play animations in your head.

K: Yes, I often try to move characters with the camera in my head and cut out a good pose to put on the screen. I shift my internal camera around.

U: Wow! That's probably the best method, but it's rather advanced, haha.

K: You're right, haha. I can't recommend it for beginners. Instead, I'll recommend 3D software, which lets you see many poses.

U: I see.

K: The only difference between people who improve quickly and those who don't is whether they keep drawing poses they're used to or they try drawing more and more difficult poses. Even if the legs and arms look weird, just keep trying anyway and your drawings will be more interesting.

U: Exactly! I used to only draw poses that I was good at, but that meant I could only draw very little. If you keep drawing, even if you aren't good at it at first, you'll get much better at it in the end.

K: It's important to not be scared, but it's scary.

U: I was scared at first too. I couldn't even draw outside of class. Thinking of drawing made me want to throw up...

K: I get that! I totally get that.

U: But I still needed to draw, so I got friends to help. They said it was just like the yips. I would force myself to finish one drawing, then a second, then a third, and slowly but surely I could draw more.

K: But I think many people are scared of it. Some people are so scared that they can't even post online after they're finished.

U: There are a lot of people like that.

K: I think if you feel that way, there's no need to force yourself to post online. What's important is what you yourself have gained from drawing. That doesn't change, no matter what external factors (like social media) there might be. The fact that you wanted to draw something and get better won't change. I think if you're afraid, you should focus on your internal progress instead of any external factors.

"What's important is what you yourself have gained from drawing."

Practicing poses

K: If you want to draw poses, you should choose drawings with attractive poses and copy them. If you want to draw faces, you can study the faces of drawings by artists you admire.

U: I agree. Copying drawings can help broaden your own horizons and teach you how to draw things you couldn't before, so it's very important.

K: When you copy something, the quality looks much better than if you were to draw something from zero, so you feel satisfied with the result and can feel good about it. That gives you motivation to continue. But you can fall into a pit of despair if you draw original stuff after that, haha.

U: But in my experience, beginners don't copy a lot, haha.

K: Hahaha.

U: Though some people do like it. I always tell people to just look at the torso. Look at the torso of a drawing you like, and look for arm and leg references to stick to

that torso. It's easy to find inspiration from the torso, which becomes the base of the illustration, and makes it easy to finish the drawing after.

K: That's so interesting!

U: It's hard to draw something good if you have to also think of a pose. It's surprisingly easier to start if you borrow just a part of a good drawing and develop it further from there.

K: That's such a great idea! You can take a part of a drawing, or start with a story or specific situation, and it makes it much easier to continue.

How to draw good poses

U: How do you think of a good pose, KawaiiSensei?

K: More than the pose itself, I focus on the silhouette. No matter how cool the pose is, it can look uncool depending on where the camera is. That's why I move the camera in my head around to find the coolest angle.

U: Do you think about what kind of poses go viral? I think virality and poses go hand in hand.

K: I think being able to connect to a picture is very important. Drawings that get a lot of likes and reposts are usually easy to connect to. For example, just having a character name on a post versus having a comment like "So happy about the anime adaptation!" will get you completely different responses.

U: Yeah.

K: It's the same with poses. Are they from the protagonist's perspective? If the character is tall, is the view from below for the viewer? Stuff like that. I try to draw poses that everyone can connect to.

U: I guess you have to think about what the viewer wants in the end.

K: I think it's good to think about whether the person looking at the drawing will enjoy it, but I think you should also just draw pictures you like. How do you think of good poses, Mr. Hiromasa?

U: I think more about whether a pose is necessary than whether it is good.

K: That feels like how a mangaka would think! This is a bit embarrassing, but if I'm waiting for someone in a place with a mirror, I'll catch myself trying to make a good pose. I might look at what creases in my clothes look good, or stand in a way that looks cool, haha.

U: An occupational hazard, haha. Sometimes I'll ask my students to make poses and notice issues in my own drawings, so I think actually looking in the mirror can help a lot.

K: It really is important. I bought a large mirror to look at myself too, haha.

U: And I've found that people who don't draw don't spend much time drawing. They might think we draw

"Even if you can't draw, you can still draw pretty well if you put the time into it."

really quickly, but if they knew how much time we actually spend drawing, the way they approach drawing might change a lot too.

K: You're right. I use my head so much when drawing.

U: Even if you can't draw, you can still draw pretty well if you put the time into it. It's not so much a matter of skill. Some of my students will show me quickly finished character designs, and they'll be missing something. I'll ask them how many references they used, and it'll just be two. And as I keep telling them to use more, they use more references and their designs get better, and they realize that you need a lot of time to think about drawings. That's what I want beginners to realize.

K: I agree! And really, I just want people to enjoy drawing at first!

U: That's the first step. Some beginners don't even know the fun of doodling. First, you need to enjoy doodling, and then we can take the next step. I want people to enjoy drawing a lot!

Thank you, Mr. Hiromasa Ueda!

Hiromasa Ueda

Profile

A lecturer at Tsukuba Business College and Kyoto University of the Arts Illustration Course who has published several books on drawing, including the Hiromasa no Oekaki Kouza (Hiromasa's Drawing Course) series.

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Ueda Hiromasa ga Oshieru! Saisoku de Umaku Naru Jinbutsu no Kakikata (Hiromasa Ueda's Method for Drawing People Better Fast!) (KADOKAWA)

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Members of KawaiiSensei

Nakamura, KawaiiSensei Management

I do design, 3D modeling, and art direction in the game and Vtuber industry. Lately, I enjoy shopping at a supermarket called Kakujoe Gyorui. My favorite fish is the blue tang. (I don't eat it.)

Noromu

I am a freelance illustrator who can also draw manga. I work as a part-time lecturer at the Kyoto University of the Arts. I was in charge of the cover art and all the character illustrations for the basic poses and action poses in this book. My favorite food is hash browns.

Iruka Umeda

I am a freelance illustrator, animator, and cartoonist. In this book, I was in charge of the overall direction, model drawings, and some of the character drawings. My favorite appetizer is cheese with smoked cod.

Sato Ito

I am a freelance illustrator with a focus on character design and concept art. In this book, I was in charge of some of the guide drawings and character drawings. My favorite sushi is whelk sushi.

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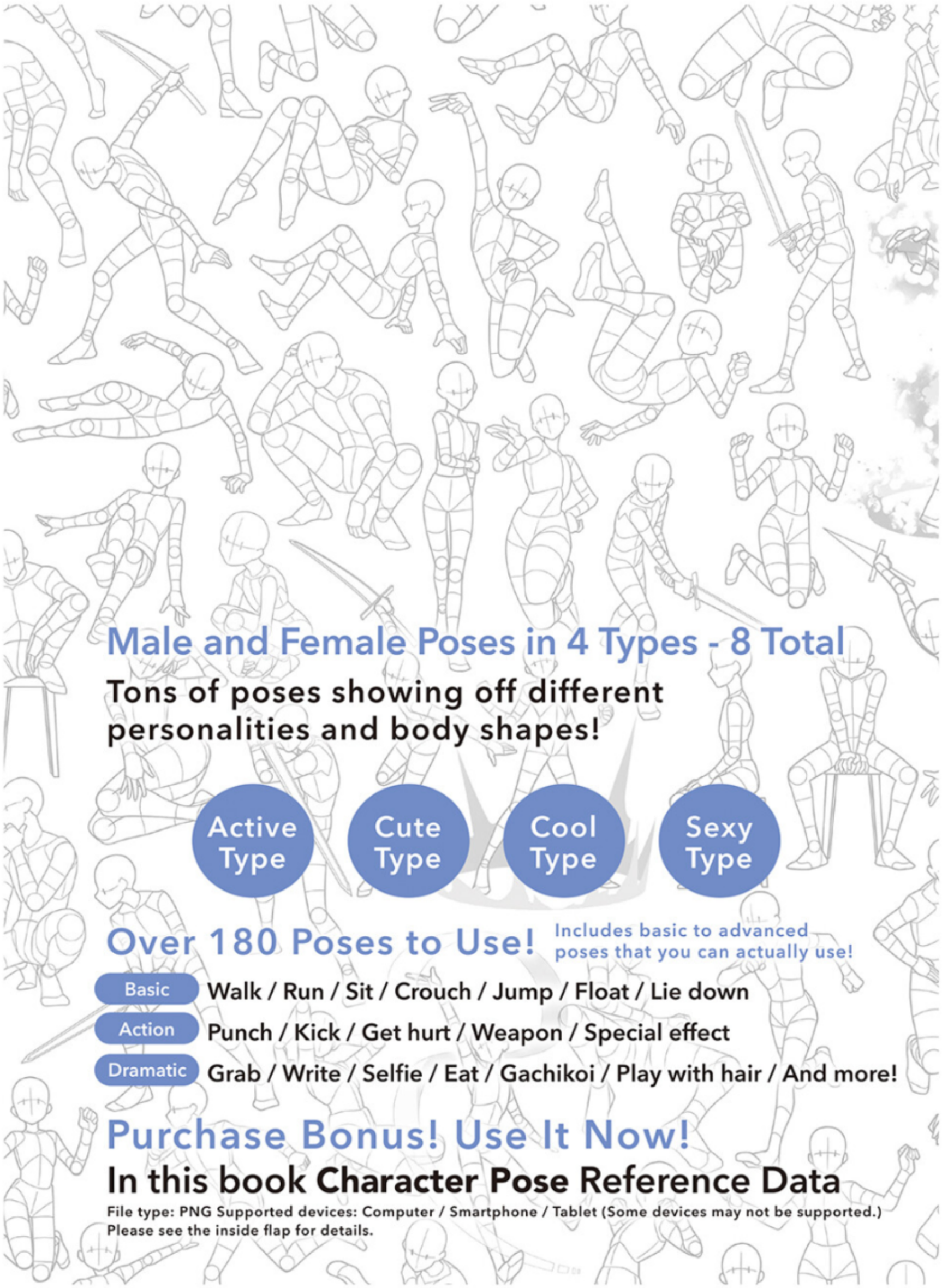

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KawaiiSensei

An illustration creator group that started in 2021. The group includes animators, manga artists, designers, and others who work on the front lines of illustration. The group is mainly active on TikTok, Instagram, X, and YouTube. Last year, they won the Rookie of the Year Award at the 2023 Top 100 UP Masters event by the Chinese video site Bilibili. KawaiiSensei shares catchy and easy-to-understand drawing techniques with the world. Since 2024, the group has also been hosting the community-focused school Illust Academia.

YouTube: @KawaiiSenseiDrawing
X: @KawaiiSensei_jp

KawaiiSensei
How to Draw Character Poses

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